



MOTORCYCLIST LOST CONTROL

Report by Clare Butler

A YOUNG father-of-two died after he lost control of his motorcycle in a tragic accident in Halesowen, an inquest heard.

Thomas Winters, aged 22, from Dunnington Avenue, Kidderminster, died at the scene of the crash on the A456 Manor Way on October 30.

Mr Winters hit the kerb of the central reservation after coming around a bend and lost control of his Suzuki bike before hitting a lamp-post, Black Country Coroners Court heard.

Two ambulances and the Midlands Air Ambulance rushed to the scene near the Hagley Road junction at around 9.30am.

Passers-by and paramedics tried to save Mr Winters but he was pronounced dead at the scene.



Tom Winters

Assistant Coroner Mr Smiley labelled the accident as 'very tragic' saying there was 'no clear evidence' of what had happened.

In a statement read out at the inquest on Monday, eyewitness Daniel Baker, said: "I saw a motorbike overtake me in the right hand lane. He was doing a normal speed for overtaking someone. "I could see him ahead of me and the back wheel of the bike wobbled from the right to the left before he collided. He did not seem to do anything wrong but just lost control."

Pc Darren McDonald, police forensic collision investigator, added: "Nothing on the road contributed to the accident. Excess speed was not a factor and we were unable to say why the rear wheel stepped out."

"It's a possibility an acceleration was too great for the weather conditions at the time."

Mr Smiley concluded the death as being as a result of a road traffic collision.

Experienced

He added: "He was an experienced motorcyclist who was travelling along Manor Way having just come from the roundabout."

"Visibility conditions were fine but the road was still damp."

"Sadly he lost control and his subsequent injuries led to his death."

Mr Winters, was the father of a baby and a three-year-old and was described as an 'adored father' by his family.

The family statement said: "As a family we are all devastated by the sudden and tragic loss of Tom. He was an adored father, son, husband, brother and friend and touched the lives of many with his kindness, compassion and beautiful humour."

HELLO NORMA JEAN – OWNER AND PUG REUNITED



Back together again – Kerry Bridge is delighted to be reunited with her puppy Norma Jean after she disappeared from her garden

WHEN Norma Jean the pug was stolen from a back garden her devastated owner thought she would never see her beloved pet again.

But it was soon 'Hello Norma Jean' as the family got the surprise of their lives when they found the puppy back safe and sound in the garden 24 hours later.

The dog's return is thought to have been prompted by a huge social media campaign to try and find her, which was seen from West Bromwich to West Virginia.

The four-month-old pug was apparently snatched after being let out into the garden

on New Year's Eve. Within minutes she had gone.

To make matters worse, frantic owner Kerry Bridge was away on holiday in Tenerife – and began the hunt to find Norma Jean from the island.

Kerry, of Carnegie Road, Rowley Regis, launched an online appeal which quickly snowballed. It was shared 8,500 times and was even seen in America.

The 43-year-old said: "My son was looking after her and had put her outside. She just disappeared. My son rang the police and various dog sites."

So Kerry took to Facebook to share the story.

The dog lover said she was going out of her mind with panic and feared Norma Jean was lost forever.

The mother-of-three, who works as a mobile beauty therapist, believes whoever took Norma Jean became aware of the growing campaign calling for her to be returned.

She said: "It made her too hot to handle and maybe whoever it was knew they wouldn't be able to sell her. They didn't harm her."

TRANSPORT

£550,000 bus station revamp is to start

THE £550,000 upgrade to Merry Hill bus station will start on Monday.

The revamp of the shopping centre bus station is being carried out by centre owners intu and Transport for West Midlands, part of the West Midlands Combined Authority.

The station refit is due to be completed by late spring and during this time the car park near Matalan will be partially closed.

The investment acknowledges the high number of shoppers who arrive at the shopping centre by bus, which intu says is as high as one in five.

FUNDING

£1.5m park project moves step closer

CAMPAIGNERS are closer to securing a £1.5 million lottery boost which could see a cafe created and bandstand revamped at Stevens Park in Quarry Bank.

The park, off Thorns Road, has reached the second stage of bids for the Heritage Lottery Fund and Big Lottery Fund.

The money could be used to make a number of improvements including the restoration of the Whitehouse building on Park Road to include a cafe.

PLANNING

Replacement of care home backed

PROPOSALS to demolish a care home and build a 66-bed home next to the site in Kingswinford have been recommended for approval by council planners.

The new care home is planned beside New Bradley Hall, off Compton Drive, which will be torn down once the new build is finished and residents moved across.

A 5,000-name petition previously halted closure of New Bradley Hall after Dudley Council said it could no longer afford to run it. The home and jobs were transferred to not-for-profit organisation Black Country Housing Group, who say the existing home is no longer fit for purpose.

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FIRM BACKS BLUEBIRD BID



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Driver admits causing death of teenager



Crash victim Nadine Foster

A MAN has admitted causing the death of a Stourbridge teenage mother by dangerous driving.

Dylan Stringer had been driving at a minimum of 78mph through Oldswinford immediately before the crash on Hagley Road, Wolverhampton Crown Court was told. Former Dudley College student Nadine Foster, 18, was a passenger in a Ford Focus being driven by Stringer when it crashed into a wall in the early hours of April 16. She was taken to hospital but died later.

Stringer, of Wychbury Road, Stourbridge, pleaded guilty to causing Miss

Foster's death by dangerous driving at Wolverhampton Crown Court on January 4.

Mr Paul Spratt, prosecuting, said the 23-year-old had been driving at a minimum of 78mph before the crash.

During the 10 minute hearing Stringer spoke only to confirm his name and enter his plea. He faces two further charges of causing death by driving when unlicensed and causing death by driving when uninsured. He was not asked to enter pleas to those counts.

Judge Simon Ward told him: "I am

not going to sentence you today. I want to know more about you than I do now." Mr Richard Butcher, defending Stringer, said his client had suffered several injuries himself in the crash.

Joseph Chance, 25, of Murcroft Road, Stourbridge, is also accused of causing Miss Foster's death by dangerous driving. He did not enter a plea and his case was adjourned until today (Friday). He is also charged with causing death by driving when unlicensed and when uninsured. Both men were granted bail on condition they do not contact each other.

Zoo bosses are just wild over £275k plans

DUDLEY Zoo's farm and four of the enclosures are in line for a revamp costing £275,000 to bring visitors even closer to the animals.

Chief executive of the Castle Hill attraction, Derek Grove, has revealed details of major work planned during 2017 as part of its five-year re-development programme.

Each of the projects aims to give the creatures more space at the same time as giving visitors a better view of them, regardless of whether the animals are outside or taking shelter inside.

The zoo has also unveiled a new logo ahead of its 80th year reflecting the animals, Dudley Castle, the ancient wooded hillside and its Modernist Tecton structures.

Mr Grove, said: "We wanted a logo that people could easily recognise as being Dudley Zoo and Rachel Lane's design, which was voted for by our staff members, should do just that by incorporating all the important elements generally associated with the site."

Viewing

The biggest scheme planned for next year, costing £100,000, is work to increase the size of the snow leopard enclosure, which is due to be completed by the summer.

By extending the one side of the existing exhibit, bosses will also be raising the height of the enclosure and the viewing area due to the gradient of the land.

Mr Grove said this would give visitors to the zoo, which celebrates its 80th anniversary this year, better opportunities to see the cats.

"Snow leopards, like all animals, like to be up high but this means they can be harder to spot," he explained. "All the work we are doing is about giving the animals better facilities and making sure our visitors can see them."

"We know that if visitors come on



Dudley Zoo chief executive Derek Grove with a sketch of the £100,000 plan for the snow leopard enclosure

a wet day they might not be able to see many animals because they are all taking shelter in the warmth. This is a double negative and that's why it's that we ensure that from the minute they get to Dudley Zoo they are seeing animals", he added.

There also plans to improve facilities for younger visitors by extending the farmyard which is popular with children and their families. A new barn will also be built as part of the scheme which will cost £90,000 and be completed by Easter.

Mr Grove said: "The farm has al-

ways been very popular but it's very old. We want to have a barn which is two and a half times bigger and have more space for the farmyard.

"It's all about giving our young visitors a better experience. They are far more interested in holding a chick or stroking a rabbit than they are seeing a lion lying down a distance away.

"It's really important that we cater for age ranges. We know people who came to the zoo as children, then they brought their own children and now they are bringing their grandchildren."

The other projects include a new parrot aviary which will cost £40,000 and will be completed by Whitsun. The three existing small aviaries, which date back to the 1980s, will be replaced with a much larger single aviary.

The final scheme is the small cat enclosure which will be completed by Easter.

The money for the projects is coming from zoo funds which is raised through entrance costs as well as animal experiences, donations, events and the animal adoption packages.

Closure of hospital ward will not now take place

A MOVE to close a ward at Russells Hall Hospital was abandoned because of the increasing demand on the hospital's accident and emergency department, health chiefs have revealed.

The Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust had planned to shut Ward A1 and reduce temporary staff numbers as part of more than 50 cost-cutting schemes but then faced an 'unprecedented' level of demand over the Christmas period.

Instead of being closed, the ward has instead been converted into a new GP-led rehabilitation facility called The Evergreen Unit.

More than 600 patients poured into A&E at Russells Hall every day over the Christmas and New Year period.

Through the ward closure and other money saving initiatives the trust was looking to save a total of more than £11.9 million over the financial year 2016/17, but they now expect the savings to be closer to £10.2 million.

Hospital bosses also disclosed that planned savings have been hit by a delay in introducing new medical equipment.

Dr Paul Harrison, acting chief executive, said: "We have 57 individual Cost Improvement Programme schemes underway which aim to improve patient care and experience, whilst also ensuring good value for money. So far this year, projects have saved the trust £6.8m. By the end of the financial year, we expect the saving to be £10.2m.

"Some of our projects have not yet made the level of savings we anticipated."

Choir evening to attract new voices

A STOURBRIDGE-based choir which is looking for new singers to boost its ranks is holding an open evening on Tuesday.

Viva Musica Choir will hold the event at Ham Dingle Primary School, in Pedmore, from 7.30pm.

Viva Musica has been performing for more than 25 years, led by musical director Rosemary Phillips.

The choir of around 70 mixed voices, accompanied by Andrew Biggs, has hosted concerts with special guests including Alfie Boe, Wynne Evans and Amore.

The choir has performed at Symphony Hall, Birmingham, and at Worcester Cathedral, and supports charities. For more details visit the www.viva-musica.co.uk website.

History society to meet at arts centre

THE next meeting of the Amblecote History Society Next will take place on Wednesday, January 18.

It will be held in the Lehr Theatre at The Ruskin Glasshouse Arts Centre in Amblecote at 7.30pm. David Berry will be speaking at the event. Admission £2.

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Pensioner is left shaken after robbers tied him up

A PENSIONER had his hands tied by masked robbers who raided his home in Dudley, stealing a First World War medal.

The criminals struck at the 79-year-old's home in Wren's Nest, just minutes before the arrival of the New Year.

Police have now launched an appeal for information in a bid to catch the raiders.

The resident was awoken by noises just before midnight on New Year's Eve. When he opened his back door to investigate he was grabbed by two masked men who pushed him back inside the house.

He was held in the corner of the living room by one of the men, who tied his hands behind his back, while the second searched through drawers and cupboards for valuables.

A war medal was taken and a bundle of £50 notes that are no longer legal tender.

The elderly homeowner was released as the men left the property.

Detective Constable Gareth Homer said: "This was a really nasty incident which left the homeowner very shaken. We are carrying out thorough investigations but anyone with any information is asked to call 101."

The first suspect was described as a white man, around 5ft 7ins to 5ft 8ins tall, slim, aged in his 20s and wearing a hat and mask. The second suspect was also a white man, around 5ft 6ins tall, of slim build and wearing a hat and mask.

Work is well under way on new HQ

WORK is pressing ahead with the construction of a multi-million-pound corporate head office for a major Black Country manufacturing firm.

The structure of Thomas Dudley's new premises is now up at Ionic Park off the Birmingham New Road.

Work is expected to be completed on the three-storey building by August.

The company which produces castings and top quality bathroom fittings was founded in the 1920s by the Dudley family, and is still owned by them nearly 100 years later.

It employs around 350 people, but the company had outgrown its current office block on the Birmingham New Road which dates back to the 1970s.

The new development will include a showroom and training facilities.

Wordsmiths meet at Old Coach House

WORDSMITHS are invited to attend sessions developing their skills. The Coachhouse writers meet on Tuesdays, noon to 1.30pm, at the Old Coach House in Oldswinford. The next session is on January 27.

Former staff help revive service for elderly



Springboard party may not be the last

ACTIVITY sessions for the elderly in Dudley have been saved thanks to former bosses ploughing their own money into a new venture.

The generous move follows the closure of a popular Age UK centre, which left hundreds of elderly residents from across Dudley without a place to go after it said farewell with a big Christmas party.

The Springboard Activity Centre in Brierley Hill was axed last month after funding was pulled by the Big Lottery and Dudley Council.

Now former employee Sandy Jones

has set up 'Bounce Back...to health & happiness' - with her own money.

A variety of activities, courses, trips and social events for people aged 50 and over in the Black Country will be on offer four days a week at the same prices as before - £2.50 to £5 per session.

Two of the Springboard's redundant staff have set up Bounce Back, which will operate from St Paul's, in Hawbush Road, and Quarry Bank Community Centre.

Sandy Jones, managing director, said: "Most of the people who at-

tended the old centre are over the moon that we have been able to provide an alternative for them.

"Our oldest person was a hundred years old in the summer and for some of them, we were the only personal contact they had all week.

"I would have been willing to give up my redundancy pay to enable them to avoid loneliness and isolation."

Regular classes started on Monday. For further information on the 'Bounce Back' call 07491 312825 or email bounceback2017@hotmail.com for costs and details.

Family's plea as woman dies after fall from car

A YOUNG woman from Quarry Bank has died after falling from the bonnet of a car driven outside a supermarket in Dudley.

The family of 20-year-old Ellie Underhill have spoken of their devastation at their 'beautiful' daughter's death, and are appealing for more information about the incident that claimed her life.

Ellie lost her life eight days after the fall on Boxing Day. Three people have since been arrested for manslaughter and conspiracy to pervert the course of justice. An 18-year-old man and 18-year-old woman, both from Stourbridge, and a 19-year-old man, also from Stourbridge, have all been bailed until March 29 while inquiries continue. The fall happened on the car park of the Tesco Extra store, at Burnt Tree at around 10.30pm.

Her family have paid tribute to a 'bubbly, lively girl' as they appealed for information.

Police also appealed for help from people inside a dark blue three-door VW Golf, which was in the car park playing loud music, and occupants of a small red Peugeot with a spoiler on the rear.

Injury

Detectives believe Ellie was on the bonnet of a silver Vauxhall Corsa which was being driven in the car park at the supermarket, off Birmingham Road, at around 10.30pm on Boxing Day.

Moments later she fell and suffered a head injury. The 20-year-old was taken by friends to Russells Hall Hospital but she failed to recover and died from her injuries on January 3. That was the same day that West Midlands Police were informed of the incident.

Her family said in a statement: "Our beautiful daughter Eleanor Jane Underhill was such a bubbly, lively girl and the life and soul of everything; she truly lived life to the fullest. We are totally devastated and really need to find out the truth of what happened that night. If anybody has any information about how Eleanor came to suffer her injuries, no matter how insignificant or small they believe that information to be, please get in contact with the police."

Sergeant Alan Wood, from the Regional Collision Investigation Unit, said: "This is a tragic incident and our thoughts are with the family at this time. There were a number of people in the car park at the time. I would urge anyone who has any information to come forward."

Contact Sgt Wood by calling 101 ext 843 6046 or email FL_COLLISION_INVEST@west-midland.pnn.police.uk



Ellie Underhill fell from the bonnet of a car being driven on the car park of Tesco Extra at Burnt Tree

Massive court bill for owner of dirty cafe

THE owner of a filthy cafe in Brierley Hill has been hit with a court bill for more than £2,600.

Wend's Cafe on the Starcrest Industrial Estate was found to have dirty plates, cutlery and surfaces along with crumbling ceilings and no handwash basin in the toilet.

Wolverhampton Magistrates Court heard that Lee Beddall took on the cafe for a less stress-

ful life but soon realised he had made a big mistake.

Beddall, aged 46, of Wollaston Road, Ambicote, pleaded guilty to nine charges of failing to comply with requirements for a food business. He will now have to clean up his cafe, which remains open, before inspectors return for their next visit.

Defence solicitor Mandeep Bassi told the court: "He be-

lieved the cafe would be a less stressful way to earn a living, but now feels it was the worst decision he has ever made. He has tried to make it work and is doing his best. If he could, he would give up the cafe tomorrow, but nobody wants to buy it from him."

Magistrates fined him £1,750 and ordered to pay £800 in court costs and £175 victim surcharge.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Councillor steps down from role

A DUDLEY councillor has resigned from her position, citing personal reasons.

Glenis Simms, who represented St Thomas' ward, said she had taken the 'very difficult' decision to stand down.

The 42-year-old made headlines in 2014 when she defected to Labour from the Conservatives.

"Being a councillor has given me a great opportunity to do what I love best, which is to try and help other people who are in need," she said.

The decision will spark a by-election in the ward.

Decision due over school site homes

A FINAL decision on whether a school will be knocked down to make way for a development of homes is expected to be made this week.

Plans to put 27 homes on the site of Holt Farm Primary School in Halesowen have been submitted.

The development has been recommended for approval but a decision was put off at the last meeting of Dudley Council's planning committee to allow members to visit the site.

The site has been disused since the primary school shut its doors for the last time in 2006.

80 jobs at risk as firm faces crisis

EIGHTY jobs in West Bromwich are at risk after a £12 million-turnover manufacturer called in administrators.

The administrators were appointed at Colson Castors and Castors International on December 29.

The business has 85 employees with all but five based at the main manufacturing site in Hill Top, West Bromwich. The others are at Christchurch, near Bournemouth. Options for the business are being assessed.

Flat and garages plan at site of abattoir

A FORMER abattoir is to be converted into a flat and garages, if plans are approved.

An application has been submitted to Dudley Council to demolish the former slaughterhouse off Quarry Bank High Street.

The two-bedroom flat will be over three garages, with access off Chapel Street.

The former abattoir has not been used for around 30 years, says nearby workers.

Snowdrops on agenda

ASHWOOD Nurseries near Kinver will be hosting a talk on snowdrops.

Eddie Roberts will give the lecture with a garden tour on February 7.

Tickets are priced at £20 each including refreshments.

Booking is on essential by calling (01384) 401996.

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THE BEST OF PETER RHODES



YES, there is a lot of it about. Sniffles, cough, headache and, just when you think you've shaken it off, it comes back again. I couldn't help noticing at a party recently how some of the cheeks one kissed were burning hot. As this winter's dreaded lurgy continues, I foresee a return of Hollywood-style contactless air-kissing. Mwah, mwah, darlings.

At least the old 19th century houses were easy to take down. I spent one summer as a labourer on the demolition of a huge Regency villa. There was no need to use a demolition ball, nor even a hammer or chisel. We simply lifted every brick by hand. There was no adhesive power in the powdery old mortar and the only thing holding each course of bricks in place was the weight of the bricks above. A bricklayer told me the old buildings remained standing only because all the woodworms were holding hands.



TV dramas are filmed months before they are screened. So the makers of *Halcyon* (ITV) must have watched in horror a few weeks ago as *Close to the Enemy* (BBC1) was broadcast. Note the startling similarities between the two offerings. Same setting, in a 1940s hotel. Same atmosphere of conspiracy about the

reasons for the Second World War. Same jazz band with sexy chanteuse. And to cap it all, both dramas had the actress Charity Wakefield playing a blonde femme fatale. Both series were about spies. So who's been spying on whom?

AS a fully paid-up guardian of Joe Public against the monstrous forces of government, I should be outraged at the news of new powers allowing Whitehall departments to share individuals' details with local councils. I find myself strangely unoutraged. If Mr J Public is pleading poverty to the town hall to get benefits but HMRC knows he is a millionaire, the sooner the taxman has a word with the town clerk, the better. In any case, didn't we all assume they were sharing information already?

Don't miss Peter Rhodes every Monday to Friday in your Express & Star

Drug addict smashed up four fruit machines after breaking into a pub - before going on to break into a nearby factory unit just weeks later - has been given a six-month community order.

Alexander McDonald, aged 28, of Lye, broke into The Chequers Inn, a Wetherspoon pub in Stourbridge town centre, on September 27.

By Clare Butler

Then on November 13, he smashed a window and climbed into the Customark factory unit on the Hayes trading estate, Lye.

He pleaded guilty to both burglaries at Dudley magistrates' court.

Mrs Maxine Jarrouse-Jones, prosecuting, said: "Two males broke into the pub via a fire exit. They went to four gambling machines and smashed them until they were destroyed and the cash was taken out.

Glass

"It is not known the amount of cash that was taken due to the machines being emptied regularly. The glass panel in the doors cost about £200 to repair. The gaming company said that the machines cost about £6,000.

"When interviewed about the incident he said he could not remember what he was doing on that day in question.

"The other matter was the incident at the Customark factory unit in Lye where McDonald gained

entry to a rear window and forced the metal bars behind it. He said he had entered the premises to find items to sell to fund his drug addiction."

Patrick Currie, defending, said: "He had been in a stable relationship and things were going well until it collapsed and as a result of that he found it difficult to cope and became very depressed and returned to his old drug habit. He accepts that he committed both offences, but it was at a time when he was involved in drugs and at a low."

McDonald had previous convictions for burglary dating from 2010.

He was given a six-month community order and told to pay £500 towards compensation. He also has to pay £185 in costs and £85 victim surcharge fee.

He also pleaded guilty to using a vehicle without insurance and was given six penalty points on his licence and told to pay £100.

Perry takes fridge up Snowdon



Perry Ware climbed Mount Snowdon with a fridge on his back

TYPICAL fundraising efforts are not this man's style - Perry Ware decided to climb Mount Snowdon whilst carrying a 50lb fridge on his back, all in aid of Birmingham Children's Hospital.

Mr Ware from Dudley, who is a breakdown engineer at DP Gears in Brierley Hill, says he was a couch potato who 'didn't do anything' until he was 50 years old. But he has spent the past five years climbing mountains - even reaching the base camp at Everest in the Himalayas.

He has now raised more than £2,500 for the hospital, which saved his grand-daughter's life.

Ava-Mae only weighed 600 grams when she was born and spent the first 12 months of her life in the hospital.

The seven-hour journey up Snowdon in September left 55-year-old Mr Ware with back and chest pains.

"It wasn't too bad getting up because I could lean forward and put the weight on my back, it was more of a problem on the way down as I had a lot of extra weight on my legs. The pain is all well worth it really and I'd do it again if I could."

Towpaths in line for £125,000 makeover

A STRETCH of canal will undergo £125,000 worth of improvements in the latest part of a scheme to transform towpaths.

A section running from Seven Dwellings Bridge to Black Delph Bridge in Brierley Hill is next in line for a towpath makeover.

Canals have been spruced up across the Dudley borough as part of a £1.7 million revamp aimed at encouraged more people to walk and cycle along them.

Work has been taking place this year on a £460,000 project between Kinver Street Basin in Wordsley and Buckpool Nature Reserve and The Dell Stadium area in Pensnett.

It also follows improvements on the towpaths in Stourbridge near the Bonded Warehouse.

Dudley Council has now secured an extra £180,000 from the Government's Local Growth Fund to work on the next stretch of canal, as part of a drive to get more people using the paths.

The area running to Brierley Hill is part of a National Cycle Network route and health chiefs are keen to make the waterside walkways more inviting. The council has put £1.34m towards the overall scheme.

Chiefs said they had seen more people using the paths since the project began.

The work has been authorised by Councillor Hilary Bills to encourage more walking and cycling.

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Drunken youth halted car so he could punch a stranger

A DRUNK teenager beat up a stranger after forcing the motorist to a standstill by running half naked into the road, a judge heard.

Trouble flared after Shaun Cotton downed eight pints and two vodkas at a family party, Wolverhampton Crown Court was told.

The 18-year-old had been upset by comments made about his late grandmother and hit out 'in frustration', it was claimed. He dashed into Ashleigh Road, Tividale, during the evening of September 17 and attacked 66-year-old Raymond Saunders after the driver was brought to a halt.

Disruption fear due to roadworks

TRAFFIC disruption is anticipated when a busy Black Country road is shut at night for essential repairs.

Sandwell Highways has revealed work is needed to repair joints on the viaduct on the Black Country New Road in Tipton as part of scheduled maintenance.

There will be overnight lane closures between 8pm and 6am this week until tomorrow (Friday).

A spokesman for the council said: "This is part of rolling roadworks that have been planned by our highways team. It is not an emergency closure."

The authority adds that after each night's work all lanes should be back open in time for the morning rush hour.

Sandwell Council is also keeping motorists updated via Twitter, Facebook and its website.

Mr John Brotherton, prosecuting, said: "The defendant was screaming and not wearing a top when he appeared in front of the vehicle."

Cotton banged on the driver's door and punched the victim in the face when it was opened. He then tried to pull the stunned motorist out of the car but was prevented by the seat belt. Cotton punched the victim in the face a second time before running away.

The victim drove home before going to hospital where it was discovered that he had a fractured cheekbone.

The defendant maintained he had delivered a single blow but his barrister, Mr Will Rose, said: "Whether there was one or two punches, thankfully the incident was over in a matter of seconds."

"This young man has never been in trouble before and accepts that he had too much to drink at the party. During the evening he overheard comments made about his grandmother, with whom he had been very close. He took out his frustration on somebody who had nothing to do with the matter."

Cotton, of Tower Road, Tividale, pleaded guilty to causing grievous bodily harm and was given 51 weeks detention in a Young Offenders Institution, suspended for two years. He was or-

Startime panto time at Cornbow



Startime Variety in rehearsal for panto Sleeping Beauty

SLEEPING Beauty will be brought to life with a new twist on a Halesowen stage thanks to the imagination of a 19-year-old producer.

Holly Mills, member of pantomime group Startime Variety, has added new characters to the play which will be performed at Halesowen's Cornbow Hall from January 18 to 21.

Startime Variety spokesman Jeanette Greenway said: "New characters will be featured including fairies called Tom, Dick and Harry. It is the first time that Holly has produced a play."

Holly's sister, Gemma, will be playing the part of Prince Stephen, who is among the new characters added by Newman University student Holly.

The pantomime group, based in Halesowen, is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year.

The pantomime will be performed at The Cornbow Hall in Halesowen and tickets can be bought by calling 07901 055685 or visiting www.startimevariety.co.uk website.

Busiest day for region's ambulances

WEST Midlands Ambulance Service had its busiest day ever on New Year's Day, figures have revealed.

The service received no fewer than 4,629 emergency calls across all the areas it covers, a staggering 807 more than the next busiest day, which was the same day in 2011.

It rounded off an incredibly busy festive period for the Trust. For the five day period from December 29 to January 2, the service took a total of 18,583 calls compared to 15,933 for the same period in 2015-16. That equates to a 16.6 per cent rise in call numbers for the five days.

In the Black Country alone, the service saw 962 calls on January 1, with 866 received in Staffordshire.

In the Black Country, December 31 saw 707 calls, with January 2 having 740 calls.

The service saw the evening of New Year's Eve and the early hours of New Year's Day filled with alcohol-related calls. The majority of calls during the five days were for people who were unwell with breathing difficulties, chest pains and falls.

Chief executive of the Trust, Anthony Marsh, said: "I am very grateful and proud of all the staff and volunteers that worked through this period. While the majority of people were enjoying time with family and friends, my staff were working 24 hours a day to keep the public of the West Midlands safe."

'Barmy Ball' will be in aid of charity

A BLACK-TIE event is being held in Brierley Hill to raise funds for the Midlands Air Ambulance. The Barmy Ball take place in the Copthorne Hotel on March 25. Tickets are priced £35 and available on (01384) 887900.

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IN MY VIEW
with Mark Andrews



Question is whether patients are cared for

AT least two people a day are dying of thirst or starvation in hospitals, according to figures from the Office for National Statistics. Malnutrition was mentioned on the death certificates of 297 patients who died in hospital during 2015, while dehydration was cited on 429.

Now every case is different, and it would be naïve to lay all of the blame on the NHS. But the sheer numbers do suggest something is amiss. Money is always an issue, but really, how much does it cost to check if somebody has been eating their food?

During my visits to hospitals I have been touched by the kindness of nursing staff towards patients who can sometimes be challenging. But I have also seen time and resources wasted on questions which have very little to do with the ailments in question, and everything to do with politically correct box ticking.

The staff are simply following instructions. But maybe their bosses, both in the NHS and government, might care to focus on the basics, and leave the lifestyle surveys to others?

□ □ □

MEANWHILE, Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospital Trust has really got to the heart the issues facing our over-stretched hospitals by spending £1,265 on 100 "gender neutral" toilets.

Now I've no idea what a "gender neutral toilet" is, but I imagine it is not too different from those, boring old-fashioned "gender specific" ones. You know, a cistern, a seat, and a chain.

The main difference, as far as I can see, is that the gender neutral ones have a rather confusing sign featuring four figures: one male, one female, one in a wheelchair, and one which can only be described as resembling somebody in a Bernie Clifton ostrich suit. Which is great when the panto cast drops in for a visit, but a waste of time for the rest of the year.

Last year Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Trust announced plans to get rid of 450 staff. Nice to know they have got their priorities right.

□ □ □

LAST week marked 50 years since the death of Donald Campbell while attempting to set an unsurpassable water-speed record on Lake Coniston.

Campbell, along with his father Sir Malcolm and Captain George Eyston, was part of a golden age of British adventurers who put their lives on the line pushing the boundaries of technology and human endeavour. Eyston, driving a car called Thunderbolt built at Tipton's Bean foundry, broke the land speed record three times, ultimately reaching 357.5 mph in 1938.

Today, the Bean has been replaced by houses. Swashbuckling eccentrics like Campbell and Eyston have made way for millionaire playboys Jensen Button and Lewis Hamilton.



Need for speed – heroic record-breaker Donald Campbell



Bill Smith with Bluebird when recovered from Coniston Water



Thyssenkrupp's Dean Melling, left, with Bill Smith

Firm backing bid for Bluebird's restoration

DOUG WOOTTON on the labour of love engineering project to restore the iconic Bluebird K7 jet hydroplane

A BLACK Country firm has helped restore the iconic jet-powered Bluebird boat to mark 50 years since it was destroyed during an ill-fated attempt on the water speed record – killing national hero Donald Campbell.

Until recently the British engineering feat seemed lost forever in Coniston Water until Cradley Heath-based Thyssenkrupp got involved.

The industrial materials group, whose UK headquarters are in Cox's Lane, provided the Bluebird Project with material including sheet metal and 350kg aluminium billets, supplied from its facility in Heywood, Greater Manchester.

The project aims to restore the wreck of Bluebird K7 – the revolutionary jet-powered hydroplane that had broken seven world records until the time of the fatal accident on the Cumbrian lake on January 4, 1967.

Flowers

The 50th anniversary of the death of former British land and water speed record holder Donald Campbell was marked at the location of the tragedy last week when his daughter Gina Campbell laid flowers on Coniston Water.

She said she was "humbled" his achievements were still recognised, half a century on from his death.

Campbell was attempting to break his own 276mph water speed record when disaster struck. He had looked on course to shatter the record, with a newly-remodelled Bluebird K7 averaging almost 300mph.

But, as he entered the measured kilometre, the unprecedented speed caused the Bluebird's nose to lift. The craft rose 30ft out of the water, somersaulted and crashed back into



Restoration of Bluebird nears completion

the lake, splitting in half on impact, Campbell was killed instantly.

In August 2000 a team led by Bill Smith, an engineer and part-time diver, located the wreckage of the Bluebird.

What started out, in Bill's words, as a 'winter project' to find the wreck eventually became a large-scale recovery and restoration mission.

Greg Buxton, a then-employee of Thyssenkrupp who knew Bill through their shared passion for diving, introduced his employers to the project. The first donations – sheet of aluminium – were made in 2006.

Mr Smith said: "We've used virtually everything that came out of the lake but we've had to re-shape what's available to use and replace some other parts."

"We were just starting out on the restoration when, by chance, Greg got in touch with

Photo credit: Mike Bull/The Bluebird Project

us. He was eager to help and put us in touch with his colleagues."

Mr Smith is insistent that donations such as Thyssenkrupp's have allowed the restoration to proceed without the pressure of a fixed deadline that would come with other means of funding.

He added: "Every part of this project is achieved through donations – the material, the heat, the light, the premises. It's hard to find that kind of support."

"This project goes beyond attention to detail. The idea is that one day you'll be able to look at archive photos, look at the restored Bluebird and not see the difference. If a screw was wonky on the original and we're putting it back, we won't try to correct it – we'll put it in wonky."

"We're not working to a deadline. It's about getting it done right. The anniversary will

come and go as we rebuild the Bluebird but she is a national treasure and we'll take as long as we need.

"You can't display the Bluebird in a museum as a wreck, the chemistry wouldn't support it. It'd continue to degenerate."

"We're very thankful for the support of Thyssenkrupp and all of the sponsors, donors and volunteers who continue to make this project possible."

A bespoke engine based on the original design has been fitted, and the Bluebird roared to life in November, for the first time since that fateful day in 1967.

Dean Melling, Director of Commercial Materials at Thyssenkrupp, said: "This is a fascinating project. We are delighted to be providing material to help support Bill and his team return the Bluebird to its former glory. We are delighted to be associated with a truly unique piece of British history."

"I've been liaising with Bill personally on the project over the last few years and it's been exciting to watch it progress. We look forward to seeing the Bluebird out on Coniston Water once again some day."

Surrey-born Donald Campbell was the holder of eight world speed records in the 1950s and 1960s in the Bluebird cars and boats.

Ms Campbell was among a small party to take to the lake, where prayers were said at the exact time of the crash. She clutched her father's teddy bear mascot, Mr Whoppit, which was found in the water after the accident.

"If my father could have chosen a way to die it would have been this way," said Ms Campbell, who was a teenager when her father died.

"If he had died a couple of weeks ago there would have been a few paragraphs in the Daily Telegraph. But here we are in 2017 talking about a hero that I still remember as a handsome young man."

"I'm so pleased and proud it's not just old fogies like me that have been inspired by what he did. It's young people too."

As the ceremony took place on Wednesday, January 4, an RAF jet made a low level flypast. The flower-laying was followed by a service at the Campbell Memorial and at Coniston Cemetery, where Mr Campbell was buried after his remains were recovered in 2001.

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Brexit – the people have spoken, so listen

RE: Brexit. A few weeks ago I read that a survey of readers had shown that were the EU referendum to be repeated the result obtained last summer might not be repeated.

Since the referendum, the media has been full of demands that the Government rush to make clear its negotiating position and that Brexit will, in one way or another, be disadvantageous to this country.

I voted 'remain' since I thought that either the vote would be overwhelmingly in favour of the 'status quo', or that the leave majority would be tiny.

Instead, there was a massive vote in favour of an exit from the EU. The nationwide majority of four per cent can leave no one in doubt that the prevailing opinion is that the people of this country consider that a better future can be had if we are able to control our borders, decide nationally how tax revenues are to be spent, have Parliament legislate, and make our own trade deals with Commonwealth members, China, the United States, and other trading partners.

What the media has termed a 'hard' Brexit is, in fact, the only form of departure from the EU that is capable of delivering what most of the people in this country want. To question the result is to undermine the very fabric of democracy.

The people were asked; the people have answered. There is nothing further to be said about the legitimacy of the vote. Look to what may be required as this nation moves towards resurgence and redemption, and hone those skills that led to great success before the EU.

LIONEL H WESTON
Stourbridge

Scrooge would be de-lighted

CONGRATULATIONS Dudley council on the display of the Christmas light in the town. No, that is not a typing error – with the 'display' running to a whole three strings across the road, the effort was nothing short of pathetic.

The Christmas tree which normally takes pride of place in the market in the town centre was pushed out to the edge of town to stand in the rarely used square outside the museum (sorry, new flats development), and the space rented out to the operator of a children's merry-go-round.

The extensive display was eventually begrudgingly switched on on December 10, a whole two weeks before Christmas. Oh, how you spoil us.

This year it was possible to stand in the town centre and not see anything to suggest that it was Christmas. Dudley Council, Scrooge is proud of you.

R MASON
Tividale

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

POST

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Sit-and-wait best system at the GP's

HERE we go again. Appointments at GP surgeries are nearing breaking point, patients are having to wait weeks for an appointment and all the alleged experts, professionals and highly overpaid executives still cannot see the wood for the trees.

There are only a certain amount of appointments that can be made in any one day and therefore this can only end with a bottleneck of people waiting for a slot but this can be reduced dramatically if only our experts, professionals and highly overpaid executives realise not all changes are for the better. So I say return to the days when patients could see a doctor when ill, and did not overload the over-stretched system. Of course, I refer to the sit-and-wait system.

The most I ever had to wait was 30 minutes and not as it is now, practically 30 days! This would reduce the queues at our A&E departments and eventually ease the life of our overworked GPs.

I fear little will change purely because those that make these changes are too afraid to admit their mistakes and will never be using the system, like us mere mortals.

PETE LOWE
Brierley Hill

Hospital's car park too costly

RE Russells Hall Hospital. I had the misfortune to be admitted to hospital over the Xmas period with respiratory problems. This wonderful hospital with its dedicated staff looked after me and reassured me. Even though it took six hours before I was admitted to the Emergency Assessment Ward, I was never left alone for more than an hour.

These lovely people (ie skeleton staff) did wonders, nothing was too much trouble. This was my choice of hospital, it is a beautiful place and spotlessly clean.

The only downfall is parking and its charges. My daughter had to pay £10 for two visits, one with items I needed and one to take me home. Their charges are outrageous and should be sorted.

But thank you to all who looked after me. I am home now with a district nurse calling, so thanks again, and God bless you all.

PAMELA BAHAKAM
Oldbury

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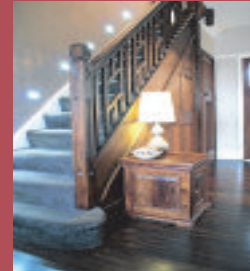
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Wednesbury's Lower High Street during the early part of the 20th century



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In contrast to the industrial times, Wednesbury's cricket scene thrived



Local historian Tony Highfield at Darlaston Library with the new book 'Ryder's Annual'

Ryder's Annual a unique glimpse of growing town

IT has taken a year to put together, but now people have the chance to glimpse into the past and get their hands on a very special piece of Black Country history.

The Very Best of Ryder's Annual book has been put together by Bev Parker and Tony Highfield.

The book features some of the stories and pictures from the well-known Ryder's Annual, that was first published in the 19th century.

The book charts Wednesbury's history from 1878 to 1918 and goes some way in illustrating the people of the town's contribution to the war effort.

Tony Highfield, aged 74, of Bloxwich revealed how he first came up with the idea for the book. He said: "I was walking down Darlaston High Street when a friend of mine, Joan Bytheway, came up to me and said she had been given some old books for a jumble sale."

"She asked whether I'd like to see them. I said I would and when I went

MEMORY LANE

Report by Jessica Labhart

round there and saw them, I couldn't believe it. The books were two extremely rare Ryder's Annuals.

"I asked if I could borrow them, which I was told I could, and then I spoke to Bev about them. We decided to begin putting a book together on the best of the annuals, and went and visited Wednesbury Library to look at their archive of annuals, too."

The book was launched on December 3 at Wednesbury Library then at Darlaston Library on December 10. Mindful Gifts CIC, based on Church Street, Darlaston, a not-for-profit organisation, is also sponsoring the book as it specialises in gifts and activities for people with dementia.

It is hoped that the book will provide an insight into the life and times of local people's ancestors. The book also contains an almanac devoted to the First World War.

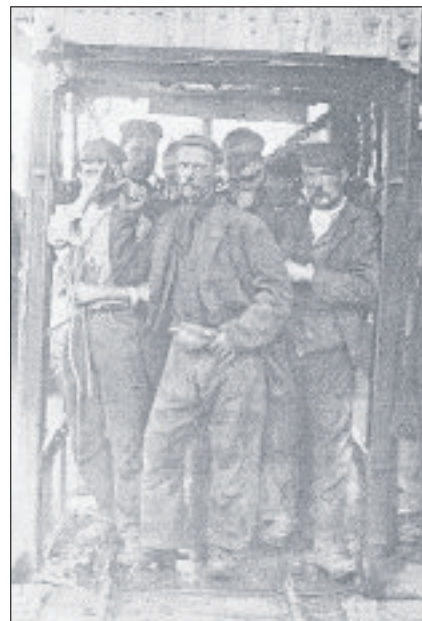
Mr Highfield said: "I just think it is so interesting to see the lives of the people in the book."

"People might be able to find their ancestors in there, old businesses, churches, groups, clubs and societies." In the introduction of the book, Bev Parker states: "The Ryder Annuals offer a unique insight into life in a successful and rapidly developing area. They feature images of the town's dignitaries, industrialists, councillors, photographs of the town centre and countless adverts describing Black Country businesses."

"For this edition of Ryder's Annual, I have chosen some of my favourite articles, adverts, and photographs from the editions that are to be seen in Wednesbury Library. Some of the images featured in the book are Lower High Street, the Town Hall and Art Gallery, Wednesbury Post Office."

"What I'd say is, this book gives you an idea of what life was like back then, but do speak to granny, before it's too late."

The book costs £9.99.



Miners from Wednesbury, working at a local colliery, in the cage to take them underground for their next shift

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Schools are facing crisis retaining headteachers

DUDLEY Council admits it is struggling to retain headteachers in its schools after new research revealed the full extent of the town's recruitment crisis.

In the last five years, 30 schools in Dudley got through two headteachers, 12 have had three heads, while two even needed four heads.

A council spokesman said: "We have a poor response for headship appointments and most schools have to re-advertise a second time."

Councillor Patrick Harley, the opposition Tory leader on Dudley Council, has accused the authority of accepting failure in its efforts to appoint school principals.

He has called for an internal investigation in a bid to improve headteacher retention.

"Headteachers are the captains of our schools and when they get it right, our schools improve and meet the needs of the young people in Dudley."

"I can appreciate that attracting the best people for head positions is no easy task due to the high amount of competition."

Concerning

"However, it is extremely concerning that the current administration appears to be wringing their hands and saying there is nothing they can do to improve the situation."

"It is no good saying 'oh, we've had a poor response' and just trying to muddle on. It is precisely that attitude that leads to a decline in standards."

"We have some excellent headteachers in Dudley, particularly in academies, but those schools that are changing heads two or three times every few years will suffer as a result."

"The council needs to take an urgent look at its internal processes."

But Martin Lynch, a spokesman



Councillor Patrick Harley has accused Dudley Council of accepting failure

for the National Union of Teachers in Dudley, said the expectations on headteachers to hit ever higher targets was turning people away from the job.

"The main problem is that all too often, headteachers are put in a no-win situation. The requirements and pressures are ratcheted up year on year as Ofsted continues to raise the bar."

"Quite simply, it can be the end of your career if your school does not hit the mark, so perhaps we should not be surprised if people are not exactly

queuing up to do the job. People are less likely to be attracted to the role of headteacher as it becomes more and more stressful," he explained.

Councillor Ian Cooper, cabinet member for children's services, said the authority was doing it it could to support governing bodies to recruit 'great leaders'.

He also cited the work of the School Improvement Alliance, which the council set up as part of a strategy to improve standards in Dudley's schools.

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Glassboys pride of the Black Country



Still smiling – these fans were not disheartened



Glassboys' fans celebrate Stourbridge's 70th minute equaliser

'THEY did us proud – it was a valiant effort'.

Stourbridge may have been knocked out of the FA Cup but they returned home to the Black Country with pride intact – and the reputation of players and fans massively enhanced.

Supporters set off for Wycombe for their third round match hoping to add to their recent giant-killing record.

As 12 coaches rolled out to start the 97-mile journey to Adams Park, there was a sense of anticipation, expectation and optimism. Hav-

The FA Cup fairytale ended but Stourbridge FC can hold their heads high says David Cosgrove

ing dispatched Northampton in the previous round, the thinking went, why couldn't Stourbridge do it again?

It was clear this was no ordinary away day, with the presence of a Danish TV crew filming the fans on one of the coaches.

Not what usually happens on a trip to Buxton in the Northern Premier League but there is something special about the world's old-

est cup competition. For fans like 77-year-old Ken Guest, this match was a lifetime in the making.

A Glassboys fan of 74 years standing, the pensioner has seen hundreds of players come through the club in his time.

But he rates the current crop as one of the best he's seen and before the match he had fancied Gary Hackett's side to grab a 1-1 draw and take Wycombe back to the Black Country for a replay.

His prediction nearly came up trumps.

The Glassboys gave it a real go and were only outdone at the last by a thumping header by Chairboys' striker, Adebayo Akinfenwa. But this wasn't a day that was just about the result.

It was about the experience, the adventure, the story to tell the grandchildren.

About the day 2,000 fans of a Northern Premier League side took over a League Two ground. The fans out sang their opposition while the players outplayed theirs for much of the tie.

A cacophony of noise came from the massed ranks of away fans for nearly an hour before kick-off.

As the match got under way the Stourbridge fans continued to drown out their hosts. All the noise was coming from the away end, with little in response from the surprisingly subdued home support.

Scenes in the Glassboys' end



Captain fantastic Tom Tonks consoled at the end of the game

were nothing short of raucous leading up to the first whistle, with chants of 'Stourbridge FC... from the Black Country' ringing around the ground. For much of the first half a party atmosphere flowed from the Stourbridge supporters, especially as they took the game to the home side.

Flare

Unfortunately, the rowdy but otherwise impeccable behaviour was marred by a flare being thrown onto the pitch from the away end midway through the first half.

An early goal at the start of the second period quietened the sea of Stour fans for a short time.

But the reaction to the Glassboys' equaliser was deafening, and continued right up to the 90th

minute and beyond. Even Akinfenwa's late winner for Wycombe did little to dampen the spirits of the Stourbridge fans. The away end remained packed for 15 minutes after the final whistle as supporters paid tribute to the valiant Glassboys' players.

Mr Guest said afterwards: "They played very well and I think they deserved a draw."

"We're disappointed, but never mind."

Dudley Council leader Pete Lowe said: "It was absolutely fantastic. Stourbridge FC made the fans proud, the town proud and the Black Country proud. They have made history."

"It was a fantastic occasion from start to finish. The supporters were superb."

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Inquest hears that man died after fall

A FORMER foundry worker died after a fall at a nursing home, an inquest heard. John Leek, aged 66, was taken to Russells Hall Hospital on Christmas Eve after he fell over getting up from the breakfast table at Netherton Green Nursing Home, in Dudley. He was then transferred onto end-of-life care and died on December 29. He moved to Netherton Green Nursing Home after suffering a fall down his stairs at home. The cause of death given was prostate cancer, lung cancer, dementia and a fractured hip. Senior Coroner Zafar Siddique said: "Sadly the trauma of the fall and fractured hip accelerated his death." A conclusion of accidental death was given.

O'Hara signs up for team Big Brother



Ex-Wolves player Jamie O'Hara enters the Big Brother house

FORMER Wolves midfielder Jamie O'Hara declared he was available to join a new club from January 1 – but on January 3 he entered the Celebrity Big Brother house. And so begins the wild and whacky world of one of the most controversial footballers ever to play in the West Midlands. The 30-year-old strutted down the catwalk with his usual swagger on launch night, decked out in a purple three-piece suit, grinning from ear to ear during his interview with host Emma Willis. He was his usual brash self declaring that he was best known for his time at Tottenham Hotspur and being married to Danielle Lloyd. The very fact O'Hara had to explain why he was famous to the viewing public makes the word 'celebrity' pretty tenuous, writes Heather Large. His ex-wife is no stranger to CBB, having found herself caught up in controversy during 2007's series five when, along with the late Jade Goody, S Club 7 singer Jo O'Meara and Bollywood actress Shilpa Shetty. While Calum Best and America's reality couple 'Speidi' – Spencer Pratt and Heidi Montag – lead the betting to be crowned champion, O'Hara finds himself among the favourites to get the boot alongside models Nicola McLean and Jasmine Waltz.

Campaign says pubs need more protection

PUBS must be given greater protection from redevelopment, campaigners say after it was revealed more than 2,000 had now been safeguarded. Several pubs in the Black Country have been made assets of community value (ACV) in a bid to stop them from closing. The status makes it more difficult for developers to convert or knock down pubs which are still operating. The Campaign for Real Ale (Camra) has called on the Government to introduce new measures to ensure owners must always seek planning permission before any changes are made. Colin Valentine, Camra national chairman said: "It is heartening that so many communities across England have spent so much time going through the process of nominating their pub as an Asset of Community Value. This shows a huge appetite for protecting pubs, which are more than just businesses, they are invaluable landmarks in our communities."

Criminal drove stolen car at high speed through red lights

A CROOK, who drove a stolen £30,000 car on its wheel rims after its tyres were shredded during a chase through the Black Country, has been jailed for four years. Andrew Twist, 35, reached 90mph in a 40mph zone, went through red lights and travelled the wrong way around traffic islands in the black Mercedes ML250 after it had been stolen in Stourbridge, Wolverhampton Crown Court heard. He struck glancing blows to two cars while other motorists and a cyclist were forced

to swerve to avoid a collision. He also drove deliberately into a police car during the incident on August 24. Prosecutor Mr David Iles said: "He displayed a deplorable standard of driving. The pursuit continued for 6.6 miles and lasted up to 15 minutes." Six police cars were involved in the pursuit along the A41 towards West Bromwich and then towards Tividale. Stingers – a spiked trap set by police – were deployed, bursting the Mercedes' tyres. Police eventually boxed in the Mercedes in Dudley Road West but Twist locked himself

inside, forcing an officer to smash the driver's window with a baton. Mr Iles added: "The defendant was still making efforts to escape and struggled with the police. He was full of fight and had to be handcuffed." Mr Stephen Hamblett, defending, said Twist, of Leys Crescent, Brierley Hill, had been on his way to sell the car for drug money and had panicked when spotted by police. Twist, who had a string of previous convictions, admitted dangerous driving, having no insurance or licence and handling stolen property.

No convictions on forced marriage

FORCED marriages are reported to West Midlands Police at a rate of one a week but there has never been a successful conviction in the region, says a police boss. Deputy Chief Constable Louisa Rolfe said that calls were often from concerned relatives but the crime was a 'complex' one to prosecute. She said that victims, normally Asian women aged 18 to 24, were often 'reluctant' to see family members criminalised. "We receive on average one report a week relating to forced marriage," DCC Rolfe told the West Midlands Strategic Policing and Crime Board. "They contact us to say they are worried for a friend or themselves. We have not had a conviction. Only South Wales Police nationally has secured a conviction."

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Curtain-up on plans for Hippodrome after rescue

EXCITING plans for the Dudley Hippodrome, which has been saved by campaigners, have been revealed.

Proposals for the building on Castle Hill have now been outlined after the keys for the theatre were passed over from Dudley Council to campaigners The Black Country Hippodrome group.

Members are now working with architects on finalising the proposals which include a three-storey extension.

The group must raise around £5 million to ensure all plans can go ahead and work can begin to re-open the building.

The plans were shown during the key handover just before Christmas, marking exactly 78 years since the day the theatre was first opened.

Modernised

The new proposals show a modernised building with a large three-storey extension to the right on the building, next to Trindle Road. A small building at the site would be demolished to make way for the extension.

Large windows on the front of the building will be installed, new signs erected and more space will be created to the front of the building giving it an 'open feel'.

The plans state that the campaigners hope to change the public perception of the building from 'an eyesore to an asset'.

Proposals show potential extra space for local arts groups, spacious seating and a renovated theatre bar which will also host small music events.

A first floor bar and restaurant is also mentioned in the plans as 'providing meals and lunches'.

A stalls refurbishment would include comfortable seats and new stairs



A first glimpse of how The Black Country Hippodrome could look by 2020



An artist's impression of inside the Hippodrome after the £5m overhaul

and lifts will also be created for better wheelchair access.

It is hoped that the building, which a year ago faced demolition to make way for a public open space, will re-open and start hosting events again by 2020, under its new name The Black Country Hippodrome.

The campaign group has been handed a five-year lease and has now

launched its drive to refurbish the largely derelict building.

The theatre opened in 1938 and played host to such stars as Tommy Cooper, Max Miller and Laurel & Hardy in its heyday, but closed as a theatre in 1964. It was a bingo hall for many years until it closed its doors in 2009. It has remained empty ever since.

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Young voices on song at Merry Hill

A BLACK Country primary school has won the annual festive choir competition held by the Intu Merry Hill shopping centre.

Burnt Tree Primary School, in Tividale, won £1,000 following the competition at the Brierley Hill mall.

Now deputy headteacher Jayne Bayliss is planning starting a regular choir at the school after the children's success in the run-up to Christmas.

A total of 22 pupils from the school took part in the competition.

They performed two songs, a Christmas medley and Santa Clause is Coming to Town.

They first performed to shoppers before being called back to sing in the final too.

Mrs Bayliss said: "We didn't have a choir so prepared the group in the six weeks up to the competition.

"Now, after winning, we will set up a choir for the school. We're all delighted, of course."

Each pupil in the choir received a £5 Merry Hill shopping centre voucher.

The school is yet to decide what it will spend the £1,000 prize money on.



These pupils from Burnt Tree Primary School were in fine voice to win the choir competition at Merry Hill shopping centre

Driver in court over father's crash death

A SON has appeared in court charged with causing the death of his father in a horror smash on the Birmingham New Road.

Kuljinder Gakhal, aged 30, was allegedly driving a Jaguar S Type in which his father, Daljit Gakhal, was a passenger when it was involved in a crash with a lorry on May 20.

The accident which killed his father took place at the junction of Tipton Road, near the Black Country Living Museum.

Gakhal, of Slough, Berkshire, is charged with causing death by dangerous driving, driving without insurance and failing to give permission for a test on a blood sample which had been taken from him.

Gakhal appeared at Walsall Magistrates Court and is due to appear next at Wolverhampton Crown Court for a plea and trial preparation hearing on February 2.

Paramedics battled to save the victim's life but he was pronounced dead at the scene. Gakhal was also seriously injured and spent time in hospital.

Parkinson's sufferer was target for robber

A ROBBER who put a Parkinson's Disease sufferer and his teenage daughter through a terrifying ordeal has been jailed for seven-and-a-half years.

The father and daughter were woken in the middle of the night and marched downstairs by masked intruder Gary Grove, who had broken into their home by smashing a window.

The 25-year-old squeezed past a mobility scooter to reach the bedroom of Christopher Shakespeare, Grove, on licence from prison after serving a sentence for aggravated burglary, demanded: "Where is your money and gold? Give me what you have or I will injure her" - referring to Mr Shakespeare's 16-year-old daughter, asleep in the next room.

Wallet

Grove was handed a wallet containing £240 cash during the raid at the property in Pedmore Walk, Oldbury. Mr Shakespeare, whose wife was in hospital at the time of the July 15 break-in, was ordered to stay put while the defendant woke the girl and took her to join her father. He told the terrified teenager: "If you lie I will hit him."

Mr Timothy Sapcote, prosecuting, told Wolverhampton Crown Court: "This was a targeted offence. Handles outside the door and the mobility scooter at the bottom of the staircase were obvious symbols that somebody disabled lived there. He later admitted he knew the man

By Simon Stone

suffered from Parkinson's Disease."

Grove searched drawers and cupboards before escaping with the money, a pocket watch, three mobile phones, an iPad and an iPod.

The court heard a lookout was outside the house during the robbery.

The mask worn by the defendant only covered part of his face and police recognised the description of the intruder, who had been involved in a string of burglaries.

They found him at the home of a relative in nearby Ombersley Road shortly afterwards with the stolen property.

Grove, of Martley Road, Oldbury pleaded not guilty claiming it was a case of mistaken identity and blamed his brother.

But the jury did not believe him. The defendant aimed a furious verbal attack from the dock at both Judge Barry Berlin and the jury at the verdict. He refused to apologise and had six months added for contempt of court to his seven-year robbery sentence.

Big Switch could save on energy bills

DUDLEY Council is urging people to sign up to its latest Big Switch money-saving energy bid which offers deals not available elsewhere.

The council said that residents who have registered at previous auctions have saved up to £300. The Big Switch brings people together to collectively reduce their energy bills. The more people who register the better the deals on offer, as it is based upon a bulk-buying concept.

In previous auctions, more than 6,000 people across Dudley have registered to switch. Since the scheme began in June 2013, the collective savings made by borough residents has topped £520,000. The Big Switch is open now with registrations closing on February 13. The scheme is open to all including those with a prepay meter, paying for dual fuel or separately and those with a fuel debt of up to £500 or less. Call Dudley Council Plus on 0300 555 2345 or visit www.dudley.gov.uk/bigswitch for details.

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Six year sentence for driver who killed Georgie

A MOTORIST who killed an 18-year-old Himley woman in a horrific road crash after hitting speeds of up to 100mph is starting a six year jail sentence.

Polish immigrant Kuba Oles was travelling so fast when his Audi A6 hurtled into Georgie Evans' Ford Fiesta that her car was torn in half, Wolverhampton Crown Court heard.

Witnesses estimated he had been travelling at up to 100mph in a 30 limit when tragedy struck moments after two other drivers remarked he was 'going to kill somebody', revealed Mr Paul Spratt, prosecuting.

The court was told the crash happened less than a month after Oles was reported to police for dangerous driving.

The Audi had narrowly missed a bus as the 24-year-old driver momentarily lost control on a roundabout before accelerating in Priory Road, Dudley, on October 27. A van driver he then overtook estimated that the car was doing at least 80mph in the 30mph zone as it passed him – and ploughed into Miss Evans seconds later.

Cameras

Judge Michael Challinor said: "One witness had estimated the speed of the Audi at 100mph."

Experts who viewed footage from CCTV cameras in the area agreed with the 80mph estimate and pointed out that the Audi was still accelerating.

The victim was driving correctly and turning into the road at a junction.

Mr Spratt said: "The impact was so significant that the other vehicle split in two. It led to her suffering such significant injury that it is highly likely Georgie died immediately."

Oles was helped to the side of the

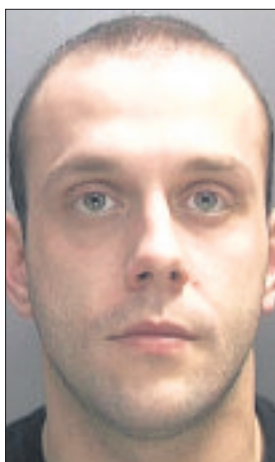


Georgie Evans – died at scene after her car was struck by speeding motorist

road by passers-by but fled from the scene when their backs were turned. He did not hand himself into the police until 18 hours later, making it impossible for him to be checked for drink and drugs.

Miss Evans, from Himley, was a single child set to become the fourth generation of her family to run its business and her death had 'devastated' her parents who were still too grief-stricken to attend this week's court hearing.

Mr Spratt said 26 days before the fatal smash a couple had been so alarmed by the driving of the defendant they made a formal complaint to police.



Kuba Oles – jailed for six years after causing fatal collision

Mr Scott Coughtrie, defending, said: "This should have been a warning to him but it was not. He totally accepts that the fatal accident was his fault. He had been driving at horrendously excessive speed after a family dispute and left the scene because he was hurt and in shock."

Oles, from Beaconview Road, West Bromwich, who came to this country in 2013, pleaded guilty to causing death by dangerous driving, leaving the scene and failing to report an accident. He also admitted the earlier incident of dangerous driving. He was jailed for six years with an extended four year licence period and banned from driving for 14 years.

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Buyers are seeking quality not quantity

ANTIQUES AND COLLECTIBLES

with John Ridgway of Perry & Phillips



AT this time of year the auction house is inundated with people keen to sell items to raise cash after the Christmas buying frenzy and they always want to know what will sell in the saleroom.

And again, at the beginning of each new year, I am more than happy to let them have a few pointers as to what items will attract the bidders at – so here goes!

The watchword is quality, in terms of all pieces, buyers will be looking for the best in 2017 rather than ‘cheap and cheerful’.

Let’s start with silver.

It continues to be very popular, with pieces often selling for their intrinsic value as opposed to their metal content value.

Good quality silver is very saleable and the really good pieces can make excellent sums auction – a superb Georgian chocolate pot sold for more than £6,000 a few months ago.

The collectors will be on the look-out for all kinds of best quality silver items, from salvers and punchbowls to candlesticks and candelabras.

There are certain names to watch for, including the famous Paul Storr, a silver and goldsmith who produced some incredible pieces during the late 18th and early 19th century.

Although Storr did design items for royalty he also made a wide range of tableware and there are no fewer than 12 Paul Storr maker marks that identify his work.

The appeal of vintage china varies from year to year as buyers’ tastes change, what was popular two years ago need not necessarily be so now and if you have china you would like to sell it’s a good idea to do a little research before bringing the items in for valuation.

Beswick horses, for example, used to gallop out of the saleroom but now they are down to a steady trot – unless you have one that is sought after by collectors, such as a model of Arkle or Nijinsky or those in Rocking Horse Grey.

We also find that certain Beswick animals such as pigs and bulls do quite well, again if they are considered collectable and the right buyers are there on the day.

Royal Worcester continues to stay the saleroom pace, we sold a huge collection of the Fallen Fruit range for hundreds of pounds in 2016 and I’m confident that this lovely china will remain a firm favourite.

Costume jewellery is very likely to remain popular – as is the ‘Real McCoy’, bidders are very keen to get their hands on quality pieces in gold, silver and platinum so if you have any really nice rings, bracelets, necklaces, earrings etc that you are prepared to part with then do bring them in for valuation.

And of course quirky items are always of interest, we all remember the fabulous Scrimshaw walking cane, that sold for a staggering £46,000 after being kept on top of a wardrobe for 30 years, and the ship’s bell that had the bidders all at sea!

So if have items you would like to sell at auction remember that quality is all-important and that the value of vintage items is never set in stone and changes from year to year.

The next Perry and Phillips sale of antiques and collectables takes place at the Mill Street saleroom, in Low Town, Bridgorth, on Tuesday February 7 – the auctions are now bi-monthly. Valuation days, for sale items only, are held at the saleroom every Wednesday from 10am until 4pm.

Walking into 2017 in heels, flats and buckles



Every pair has a story to tell

I MUST admit I have a great love of shoes and am a bit of a collector. Dating back to my college days, 30 years ago, I have stored neatly stacked boxes complete with a photo of the enclosed footwear so I can find the contents easily. I still wear most of them, still like them as much as I did when they were bought.

They are keepsakes, memories and I have a story to tell for most of them. Sadly, my wedding shoes are no longer with them. A pair of soft ivory leather, gathered strap with a 3” covered heel, later dyed black to get the optimum wear as I loved them so much but worn too often and eventually falling apart.

My first job as a shoe designer was with Lotus Shoes in Stafford and my collection began from then.

Today there is so much choice, allowing us to buy shoes and bags to match every outfit, bright primary coloured court shoes and floral printed ballet flats, chunky platforms, block heels and metallic brogues.

The designers are providing us with unique styling, elegant sleek heels with diamante trims and draping chains, mixtures of type, sling back boots and laced front mules.

STYLE FOCUS

with Janet Timmis



This coming year we will see ‘Sliders’ (pool shoes) in our high-street stores.

Flat, chunky soled mules, full and open toe, fabric, leather, cut out, decorative, printed and plain. The style suits both men and women, easy to wear and fantastic for 2017 holidays, round the pool, on the beach or walking in comfort.

The latest catwalk shows showed us lots of buckles on footwear and ankle socks teamed with heels, chunky gothic styles and lacing.

Suede and velvet seem to be especially popular and elegant evening styles still have pointed toes although some slightly rounded shapes are appearing. 1980’s platforms make an appearance, think David Bowie or Spice Girls. There will still be sculptured and kitten heels, boots come in ankle to thigh high and everything in between.

Wedding shoes are returning to traditional styles with 3” or 4” heels, soft kid leathers, subtle and elegant without all the glitter and diamante, court shoes or peep toes. However, some brides are choosing the vintage shapes in startlingly bright fun colours to match their wedding theme, layers of white chiffon and satin worn with red shoes or sleek lace gowns with turquoise sandals, fun and cheerful.

Sports trainers are neater, simpler and lighter, interesting fabrics with practical soles and built in technology for the top of the ranges such data analysis chips. Comfort is created by technical spacer mesh and moulded soles to cradle and protect our feet.

There is so much choice, footwear for every day and for every occasion. Vast choice of heel heights, delicate or chunky, pointed or squared toes and every available colour, something to suit everyone. The trend this year seems to be what you make it!

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Our busy lifestyles take their toll on the legs – around 52 per cent of women say they experience heavy legs at least twice a week, according to Scholl

Lighten your load and dance through the day



Our feet and legs can take a battering

IT’S a nice idea: putting your feet up and bunkering down for some winter hibernation.

In reality though, our bodies can be put through their paces during the festive rush, with all the to-ing and fro-ing and extra shopping to be done (and on the dance floor at Christmas and new year parties).

So if the holiday season has taken its toll, leaving you with tired, heavy legs, you might want to hot-foot it over here to check out Scholl’s top tips, in conjunction with their Dance Through Your Day campaign.

According to research by the brand, around 52 per cent of women say they experience heavy legs at least twice a week.

Scholl has now launched a new Light Legs Compression Hosiery range (Scholl Light Legs Compression Tights 60 Den, £14.99, Boots).

Here are seven ways to relieve tired legs this winter...

1. Compression tights

Michael Harrison-Blount, expert podiatrist at the University of Salford, says: “We all know how tiring legs can feel after a long day on your feet, and compression tights can really support you to help alleviate this.

The highest level of compression should start at the ankle, which moves blood from the foot and ankle into the calf. Intermediate compression should then be

By Ella Walker

applied to the calf to move blood up the leg and into the thigh.

Finally, lowest compression should be at the thigh to keep the blood moving towards the heart.”

2. Walk

Heavy legs often happens because the valves in your legs, which stop blood from flowing back down and pooling in your extremities, are weakened.

All that blood collecting in your legs is what makes them feel heavy, but regular walking helps keep the valves strong and your blood pumping.

3. Stay out of the sun

Excessive heat will dilate your veins, so make sure your legs don’t overheat, in the sun or the bath, as the blood flow to your legs will increase, and your feet in particular can end up feeling quite swollen and weighty.

4. Raise your legs

Lying on the floor with your legs raised, and your feet braced against the wall for five to 10 minutes every morning and evening will help relieve heaviness and aches.

5. And don’t cross them

However comfortable it may feel to sit with your legs crossed, it restricts proper blood flow and can weaken your vein valves.

It’s a good idea to stretch regularly, move around and work your feet muscles too.

6. Loosen your clothes

While compression tights can benefit heavy leg feeling, wearing tight jeans, strappy sandals, high heels and clothes that can cut in, will hinder blood flow – if you feel comfortable and free, so will your veins.

7. Take a cool shower

Shower instead of taking a bath, and try spraying your legs and feet with a blast of cool water – it’ll reinvigorate your extremities and get the blood pumping, so your limbs won’t feel so lethargic.

Condition

Meanwhile, more than four-fifths (81 per cent) of GPs say they’ve seen an increase in cases of irritable bowel syndrome in the past 10 years, according to a new survey by Buscopan IBS Relief.

Despite the condition – associated with symptoms such as bloating, diarrhoea, constipation, and abdominal pain and discomfort after eating – now being relatively common, one in six (17 per cent) of people with IBS admit they haven’t told anybody about it. What’s more, 15 per cent still question whether IBS is a real medical condition, and one in 10 Brits haven’t heard of it. The research by Buscopan, who quizzed 5,000 people with IBS, plus 250 GPs.

Parkrun launches at Dell Stadium



Run director Nick Price and Dudley Mayor Councillor Mohammed Hanif with runners at the Dell Stadium

HUNDREDS of runners braved the cold to take part in the first Parkrun in Dudley.

The weekly running event, which is held at parks across the county, has now arrived in Dudley's with the first Parkrun being held in the borough at the Dell Stadium, Pensnett.

More than 300 people took part in the run, which is a 5km route. Started by run director Nick Price and Mayor of Dudley Councillor Mohammed Hanif, it began with two laps of the Dell Stadium's running track, took runners along the canal before returning on to the track.

For details visit www.parkrun.org.uk/dudley website.

Illegal worker held to account

ILLEGAL immigrant Parvin-Singh slipped into this country unnoticed and found a job but was caught out after he was robbed, Wolverhampton Crown Court heard.

The 30-year-old single man decided it would be safer to have his wage paid into a bank so went to open an account at the HSBC branch in Dudley using a fake Portuguese passport.

Staff at the bank found his behaviour suspicious and were confident both he and a male friend who accom-

panied him were not speaking to each other in Portuguese, explained Mr David Iles, prosecuting.

Home Office experts checked his passport and found that the document was false. Singh was arrested when he went back to the branch for an arranged meeting.

A search of his home revealed a another forged passport in his name, although this one was Italian.

Mr Simon Hanns, defending, said: "He had been robbed of money and could not make an official complaint because he is an illegal immigrant who should not have been working in

this country. He sought to open a bank account to protect the money he was illegally earning.

"This was an unsophisticated attempt. He is a respectful man of previous good character who is the first member of his family to fall foul of the law in any country."

Singh, of Owen Street, Brierley Hill pleaded guilty to possession of a false identity document and was jailed for 15 months.

Recorder Greg Pryce said that the fact the defendant had a second false passport at his home aggravated the offence.

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WESTON/SUPER-MARE - SANDRINGHAM HOTEL **SOLD OUT** **19th - Friday 17th February 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions, Half-board - En-suite rooms with tea/coffee, Entertainment, Lift, Free hot drinks on coach

40'S THEMIS MYSTERY - WHERE WILL WE BE? HOTEL **SOLD OUT** **19th - Friday 17th February 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions, Evening meal - Breakfast, Entertainment, Free hot drinks on coach

TORQUAY - MARQUIS HOTEL - Winter Warner NEW **SOLD OUT** **20th Feb - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions, Half-board, En-suite room with tv, tea/coffee, Entertainment 2 nights, Free hot drinks on coach

LLANDUDNO - ST KILDA HOTEL **SOLD OUT** **20th Feb - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions - Half-board (home cooking), En-suite room with tv, tea/coffee, Entertainment and dancing, Lift to all floors, Free hot drinks on coach, Single room supplement £2

MOTOWN WEEKEND - TORQUAY NETWATH HOTEL **SOLD OUT** **Friday 10th March 2017 2 DAYS**
Excursions - Entertainment, Sunday rest

EASTBOURNE - HADDON HALL **SOLD OUT** **Monday 13th - Friday 17th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions - Half-board (choice menu), En-suite room with tea/coffee, Entertainment and dancing, Free hot drinks on coach

SPRING WEEKEND MYSTERY? - WHERE WILL WE BE? HOTEL **SOLD OUT** **Monday 13th - Friday 17th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions - Evening meal - Breakfast, Free time in London, Free hot drinks on coach

EXMOUTH - CAENISHEN HOTEL **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions - Half-board, Lunch/Dinner inc 1 day of week, En-suite room with tea/coffee, Entertainment - Lift, Free hot drinks on coach

ILFRACOMBE - IMPERIAL HOTEL **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions, Half-board - En-suite room with tv, tea/coffee, Dinner/Lunch inc 1 day during stay, Entertainment, Free hot drinks on coach

MYSTERY 4 DAY TOUR - WHERE WILL WE BE? HOTEL **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions - En-suite rooms with tv, tea/coffee, Lift, Evening meal each night - Entertainment, Free hot drinks on coach

ISLE OF WIGHT - BARRSHORE HOTEL NEW **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions - Ferry crossing, Half-board, Lunch/dinner included 1 day during your stay, En-suite room with tv, tea/coffee, Entertainment - Lift - Free hot drinks on coach

TENBY - CLARENCE HOUSE HOTEL **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions, Half-board (choice of dinner menu), En-suite room (many with sea-view), Entertainment, Happy Hour 6.30pm - 8.30pm, Free hot drinks on coach

TORQUAY - NETWATH HOTEL **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions - Half-board, En-suite rooms with tv, tea/coffee, Entertainment, Lift, Free hot drinks on coach

WARNERS ORTON COASTAL VILLAGE NEW Easter Week **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions, Half-board, En-suite rooms with tv, tea/coffee, Entertainment, Lift, Free hot drinks on coach

WARNERS ORTON COASTAL VILLAGE NEW Easter Week **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions, Half-board, En-suite rooms with tv, tea/coffee, Entertainment, Lift, Free hot drinks on coach

WYEMOUTH - FAIRHAVEN HOTEL **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions - Half-board, En-suite rooms with tv, tea/coffee, Entertainment, Lift, Free hot drinks on coach

PAGNTON - HOTEL BONAIR ESPANADE **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions, Half-board, En-suite rooms with tv, tea/coffee, Entertainment, Lift, Free hot drinks on coach, Balcony room supp. £2 p per person

MYSTERY WEEKEND - WHERE WILL WE BE? HOTEL **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions, Evening meal - Breakfast, Entertainment, Free hot drinks on coach

TORQUAY - NETWATH HOTEL **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions, Half-board, En-suite rooms with tv, tea/coffee, Entertainment, Lift, Free hot drinks on coach

GREAT YARMOUTH - NEW BEACH HOTEL **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions, Half-board, En-suite room with tv, tea/coffee, Two LBS, Entertainment, Free hot drinks on coach

ST IVES - OUTAGE HOTEL NEW **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions, Half-board, En-suite rooms with tv, tea/coffee, Entertainment, Lift, Free hot drinks on coach

HAYLING ISLAND - Mill Rhye Holiday Village **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions, Half-board, En-suite rooms with tv, tea/coffee, Entertainment, Lift, Free hot drinks on coach

MORCAMBE & THE LAKES - AUKLAND HOTEL **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions, Half-board, En-suite rooms with tv, tea/coffee, Entertainment, Lift, Free hot drinks on coach

LYTHAM ST ANNES - LINDUM HOTEL **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions - Half-board, En-suite room with tv, tea/coffee, Lift, Entertainment, Free hot drinks on coach

RABRACOMBE - HOTEL DE LA MER **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions, Half-board - En-suite rooms with tv, tea/coffee, Entertainment, Lift, Free hot drinks on coach

BORNEUMOUTH - ULSWATER HOTEL **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions, Half-board, En-suite rooms with tv, tea/coffee, Entertainment, Lift, Free hot drinks on coach

ISLE OF WIGHT - THE TROUVILLE HOTEL **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions - Ferry crossing, Half-board (sea-view restaurant), En-suite room with tv, tea/coffee, Many rooms with sea-view, Balcony and Entertainment, Lift, twin gym & indoor heating, Free hot drinks on coach

PAGNTON - HOTEL BONAIR ESPANADE **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions, Half-board, En-suite rooms with tv, tea/coffee, Entertainment, Lift, Free hot drinks on coach, Balcony room supp. £2 p per person per night

EASTBOURNE - THE HADLEIGH HOTEL **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions, Half-board, En-suite rooms with tv, tea/coffee, Entertainment, Lift, Free hot drinks on coach

WESTON/SUPER-MARE - SANDRINGHAM HOTEL **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions, Half-board - En-suite rooms with tv, tea/coffee, Entertainment, Lift, Free hot drinks on coach

1109 RABRACOMBE - HOTEL DE LA MER **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions - Half-board, En-suite room with tv, tea/coffee, Entertainment, Lift, Free hot drinks on coach

1109 MYSTERY WEEKEND - WHERE WILL WE BE? HOTEL **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions, Evening meal - Breakfast, Entertainment, Free hot drinks on coach

1109 SCARBOROUGH - RED LEA HOTEL **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions - Half-board, En-suite room with tv, tea/coffee, Entertainment - Lift, Free hot drinks on coach

1235 SIDMOUTH - THE BEDFORD HOTEL NEW **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions, Half-board, En-suite room with tv, tea/coffee, Entertainment, Free hot drinks on coach

1109 LONDON - 5 STAR WALDORF HOTEL **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions, Half-board, En-suite room with tv, tea/coffee, Entertainment, Free hot drinks on coach

1109 SCOTLAND - DUNOON - THE ESPANADE HOTEL **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions - Half-board, En-suite room with tv, tea/coffee, Entertainment, Lift, Free hot drinks on coach

1235 EASTBOURNE - HADDON HALL **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions - Half-board (choice menu), En-suite room with tv, tea/coffee, Entertainment and dancing, Free hot drinks on coach

1115 TORQUAY - NETWATH HOTEL **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions, Half-board - En-suite room with tv, tea/coffee, Entertainment, Lift, Free hot drinks on coach

1115 TORQUAY - NETWATH HOTEL **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions, Half-board - En-suite room with tv, tea/coffee, Entertainment, Lift, Free hot drinks on coach

1235 ISLE OF WIGHT - THE SHANKLIN HOTEL NEW **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions, Half-board, En-suite room with tv, tea/coffee, Entertainment, Free hot drinks on coach

1235 LLANDUDNO - QUEEN'S HOTEL **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions, Half-board, En-suite room with tv, tea/coffee, Entertainment, Lift, Free hot drinks on coach

1135 TORQUAY - NETWATH HOTEL **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions, Half-board, En-suite room with tv, tea/coffee, Entertainment, Lift, Free hot drinks on coach

1235 TENBY - CLARENCE HOUSE HOTEL **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions, Half-board, En-suite room with tv, tea/coffee, Entertainment, Lift, Free hot drinks on coach

1235 MYSTERY WEEKEND - WHERE WILL WE BE? HOTEL **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions, Evening meal - Breakfast, Entertainment, Free hot drinks on coach

1109 ILFRACOMBE - IMPERIAL HOTEL **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions, Half-board, En-suite room with tv, tea/coffee, Entertainment, Lift, Free hot drinks on coach

1109 WYEMOUTH - FAIRHAVEN HOTEL **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions, Half-board, En-suite room with tv, tea/coffee, Entertainment, Lift, Free hot drinks on coach

1235 MORECAMBE - CARLISLE/SETTLE & SCOTISH BORDERS AUKLAND HOTEL **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions, Scottish Borders & Carlisle/Settle Train Ride, Half-board (home cooking), En-suite room with tv, tea/coffee, Entertainment and dancing, Lift, Free hot drinks on coach

1235 TENBY - CLARENCE HOUSE HOTEL **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions, Half-board (choice of dinner menu), En-suite room (many with sea-view), Entertainment, Happy Hour 6.30pm - 8.30pm, Free hot drinks on coach

1235 MYSTERY WEEKEND - WHERE WILL WE BE? HOTEL **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions, Evening meal - Breakfast, Entertainment, Free hot drinks on coach

1235 ISLE OF WIGHT - THE TROUVILLE HOTEL **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions - Ferry crossing, Half-board (sea-view restaurant), En-suite room with tv, tea/coffee, Many rooms with sea-view, Balcony and Entertainment, Lift, twin gym & indoor heating, Free hot drinks on coach

1235 TORQUAY - NETWATH HOTEL **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions, Half-board - En-suite room with tv, tea/coffee, Entertainment, Lift, Free hot drinks on coach

1235 EASTBOURNE - LANGHAM HOTEL NEW **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions, Half-board, En-suite room with tv, tea/coffee, Entertainment, Lift, Free hot drinks on coach

1115 LYTHAM ST ANNES - LINDUM HOTEL **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions, Half-board, En-suite room with tv, tea/coffee, Entertainment, Lift, Free hot drinks on coach

1235 WYEMOUTH - FAIRHAVEN HOTEL **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions, Half-board, En-suite room with tv, tea/coffee, Entertainment, Lift, Free hot drinks on coach

1235 SKENEGES - SAVOY HOTEL **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions, Half-board - home cooked food, En-suite room with tv, tea/coffee, Entertainment, Lift, Free hot drinks on coach

1119 RABRACOMBE - HOTEL DE LA MER **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions, Half-board, En-suite room with tv, tea/coffee, Entertainment, Lift, Free hot drinks on coach

1235 LLANDUDNO - ST KILDA HOTEL **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions, Half-board, En-suite room with tv, tea/coffee, Entertainment, Lift, Free hot drinks on coach

1235 WESTON/SUPER-MARE - SANDRINGHAM HOTEL **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions, Half-board, En-suite room with tv, tea/coffee, Entertainment, Lift, Free hot drinks on coach

1235 TORQUAY - NETWATH HOTEL **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions, Half-board, En-suite room with tv, tea/coffee, Entertainment, Lift, Free hot drinks on coach

1235 TORQUAY - NETWATH HOTEL **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions, Half-board, En-suite room with tv, tea/coffee, Entertainment, Lift, Free hot drinks on coach

1235 BOKNOR REGIS - ROYAL NORFOLK HOTEL **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions, Half-board, En-suite room with tv, tea/coffee, Entertainment, Lift, Free hot drinks on coach

1279 TORQUAY - NETWATH HOTEL **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions, Half-board - En-suite room with tv, tea/coffee, Entertainment, Lift, Free hot drinks on coach

1245 NEWQUAY - ELVAT HOTEL **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions, Half-board - En-suite room with tv, tea/coffee, Entertainment - Lift, Games Room, Free hot drinks on coach

1239 MYSTERY WEEKEND - WHERE WILL WE BE? HOTEL **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions, Evening meal - Breakfast, Entertainment, Free hot drinks on coach

1279 BLACKPOOL ILLUMINATIONS - CARN-BRAE HOTEL **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions (and tour of the lights), Half-board with choice of menu (home cooking), En-suite room with tv, tea/coffee, Entertainment, Lift, Free hot drinks on coach

1149 BLACKPOOL ILLUMINATIONS - CARN-BRAE HOTEL **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions, Half-board, En-suite room with tv, tea/coffee, Entertainment, Lift, Free hot drinks on coach

1239 LONDON - 5 STAR WALDORF HOTEL **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions, Half-board, En-suite room with tv, tea/coffee, Entertainment, Lift, Free hot drinks on coach

1115 WARNERS - BODEWYDAN CASTLE NEW **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions, Half-board, En-suite room with tv, tea/coffee, Entertainment, Lift, Free hot drinks on coach

1239 TORQUAY - NETWATH HOTEL **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions, Half-board, En-suite room with tv, tea/coffee, Entertainment, Lift, Free hot drinks on coach

1239 PAINSTON - HOTEL BONAIR ESPANADE **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions, Half-board, En-suite room with tv, tea/coffee, Entertainment, Lift, Free hot drinks on coach, Balcony room supp. £2 p per night

1115 TORQUAY - NETWATH HOTEL **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
Excursions, Half-board, En-suite room with tv, tea/coffee, Entertainment, Lift, Free hot drinks on coach

1239 BOURNEMOUTH - ULSWATER HOTEL **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
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1239 LYTHAM ST ANNES - ASTON PARK HOTEL **SOLD OUT** **Monday 20th - Friday 24th March 2017 5 DAYS**
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Orchids will keep going long after Christmas

Did you receive a beautiful orchid for Christmas? If so, it could last for years with the right care, says Hannah Stephenson

ALREADY thinking about taking the decorations down? Have your poinsettias started to wilt and is the mistletoe looking tired? One plant that should stand the test of time is the orchid. These exotic-looking houseplants may have a reputation for being tricky, but they are really not if you just follow a few rules. Orchids, which originate from South East Asia, are not as fragile as they seem and really don't like too much fuss. Most of them are pretty tough and they are getting easier to grow as nurseries bring out new varieties. It's generally overwatering that kills them. Most hybrids come from warm, humid forests and like a warm, tropical climate. Trends are changing as people start to shy away from the big, showy flowers to the more dainty, subtle and smaller flowered types. Slipper orchids (Paphiopedilums), popular in Victorian times with their waxy leaves and lip-shaped pouch at the front of the flower, are again becoming popular. The flowers are usually long-lasting and can remain in bloom for months.

Sunlight

Moth orchids (Phalaenopsis) are probably the most popular and are well suited to life indoors, requiring a minimum temperature of 16C (61F). There are many myths about orchids - that they are difficult to grow and that they must be shaded. In fact, they do well on a windowsill and flower more freely if you give them some sun. However, don't make the mistake of moving them from somewhere very shaded into direct sunlight or they will suffer leaf scorch. Another myth is about misting them. Orchids don't need misting. They can be left without water for a week then submerge the pot in a bowl of tepid water for a few minutes until it is moist all through, take it out and leave it on the draining board for the same amount of time, until the excess water has come out, before returning it to its permanent spot. Then leave it for another week. The plant should be allowed to dry out between watering. Put half strength orchid feed in with the water each time you water the plant. Once they've finished flowering, use a pair of sharp secateurs to cut the flowered stem back to just above a joint, two or three joints up from the base. It should draw up another spike within a few weeks. Orchids don't have a yearly cycle of producing flowers. They can develop flower spikes at any time of the year. They have rambling roots which spread across the surface of the pot, searching for nutrients. The roots contain chlorophyll and produce energy from light, so growing them in open lattice baskets or clear pots is better. That way you are also more likely to notice if the roots are wet or dry.

Temperature

Orchids need bright light, but not direct sunlight. They benefit from extra artificial light in winter to encourage flowering, in an ideal room temperature of around 20C (68F) and phalaenopsis don't like the cool nights favoured by some other types, so don't let the temperature inside fall lower than around 18C. However, they do need a resting period after flowering. I generally put them on a windowsill out of direct sunlight in a cool room, until they start to show signs of new growth again. Moth orchids should be repotted about once a year - you can buy specific compost for orchids from garden centres and while it is expensive, it's worth it. Don't be tempted to cut off the roots growing outside the pot, as they are aerial roots which absorb moisture from the air, keeping the plant healthy. If you are growing a cymbidium orchid indoors, be warned that it does not like being repotted and may not flower for several years afterwards. These orchids, which come in a wide colour range with spikes bearing up to 20 long-lasting flowers, normally flower from early winter to late spring.



A close-up of the leaves of the spotted laurel, which bears red flowers

Dense evergreen shrub adds interest to borders

BEST OF THE BUNCH – Spotted laurel (Aucuba japonica 'Variegata') THIS dense, bushy evergreen shrub has eye-catching variegated leathery leaves all year round and produces upright clusters of small red flowers in mid-spring, followed on female plants by bright red berries. Aucuba will grow well in any soil, even if it's starved and dry, in sun or shade. Be warned, though, that new growth can be scorched by icy winds, the variegated types will need some sunshine, and for berries you need a female variety with a male type nearby. Spotted laurel grows to around 2.1m. Male types include 'Golden King' and 'Crotonifolia' while female varieties include 'Gold Dust'. Cut back as required with secateurs in spring. **GOOD ENOUGH TO EAT – Storing Christmas vegetables** YOU should still be enjoying your home-grown festive vegetables fresh from the garden, harvesting sprouts, leeks and parsnips as you need them. But if you have a permanent house full of people, you may want to store them for convenience.

The best place to store carrots, onions and potatoes in sacks, is a frost-free shed or garage. Salad leaves that you may have been picking from the greenhouse will keep far better in a cool shed than a hot kitchen during the festive season. If the weather turns freezing cold, lag your sacks or boxes of vegetables with newspaper, or move them to a cool place indoors such as an under-stairs cupboard. And if you are keeping any veg in the veg compartment in the fridge, make sure they are dry before you put them in or they will just rot. **WHAT TO DO IN THE GARDEN THIS WEEK** :: Escape to the shed where you can have a big clear-up, tidy and hang garden tools, chuck out old half-used bottles of feed or other contents past their sell-by date and prepare for the season ahead. :: Cover soil needed for early sowings with clothes to warm it. :: Avoid walking on lawns or pruning fruit trees when it's frosty. :: Sow seeds of slow maturing half-hardy summer bedding plants, including verbenas, pelargoniums and begonias in heated propagators.

Stay awhile and look more closely at frosty offerings

ROSS UNDERWOOD

Head Gardener at Hodnet Hall

Stay yet, my friends, a moment stay—
Stay till the good old year,
So long companion of our way,
Shakes hands, and leaves us here.
Oh stay, oh stay,
One little hour, and then away.

The year, whose hopes were high and strong,
Has now no hopes to wake;
Yet one hour more of jest and song
For his familiar sake.
Oh stay, oh stay,
One mirthful hour, and then away.

The kindly year, his liberal hands
Have lavished all his store.
And shall we turn from where he stands,
Because he gives no more?
Oh stay, oh stay,
One grateful hour, and then away.

Days brightly came and calmly went,
While yet he was our guest;
How cheerfully the week was spent!
How sweet the seventh day's rest!
Oh stay, oh stay,
One golden hour, and then away

I THINK that William Cullen Bryant hit the nail on the head with those lines celebrating the turning of the year. Yet the year, it cannot be said, has quite "lavished all his store." Waking to a few refreshing and frosty mornings exposes the very bones of nature in terms of the structure of wild and garden plants. When everything is bare you are forced to look closely and pay attention. As I stepped out of my door into the garden I bent to look at the frost of the leaves of a Phlomis tuberosa 'Amazone' a plant that is at home in full sun in dry free draining soil as are other members of the family. In the summer tall stems emerge carrying whorls of pink or on other members, yellow, flowers. The flower stems dry to a brown in winter but stand up above basal foliage which appears matt green. The large arrow shaped leaves are covered in silvery hairs which help trap moisture in dry spells but are picked out beautifully by the frost. Other evergreens are worthy of more than a passing glance as well. Euphorbias largely finished doing their stuff in early or late summer though being a family of many (though not exclusively) evergreens they can stand up to scrutiny when painted with silver. E. characias ssp Wulfenii has bluish grey leaves that are positively delightful when overlaid by silver. Another evergreen which is beginning to flower its socks off is the statuesque and native evergreen the so called 'stinking' hellebore, H. foetidus. This native of woodland resides in even dry shade under deciduous trees. The narrow leaves are a deep



Beginning to flower its socks off is the statuesque and native evergreen the so called 'stinking' hellebore, H. foetidus



Grey euphorbia leaves look delightful covered in silver



The start of witch hazel season brings papery petals

green but in the winter tall spikes of bell shaped light green flowers open. They are extremely attractive to pollinators. They live up the winter harden with the freshness of the flower colour amidst all of the faded brown and tawny shades. The flowers are extremely weather resistant and will emerge perfect from any winter battering. The 'stinking' epithet comes from the scent that can be given off when the leaves are crushed. If you are really looking for fireworks then you are in for a treat as it is the start of witch hazel season when papery petals in shades of yellow, red, orange and gold are unwrapping themselves from buds along bare branches. Scent is of course the other feature of these wonderful garden shrubs and whilst you are putting your nose to yours gave a look out for suckers at the base and remove them promptly. The brown stems of grasses stand out starkly when all around them has collapsed though those on the upright Calamagrostis 'Karl Foerster' are molten gold when backlit by the winter sun. The drooping flower heads of Miscanthus cultivars capture the ice and water drops which sparkle in the morning sunlight. Stems provide so much interest in a bare season and the ghostly stems of Rubus cockburnianus overlaid as they are with a prominent white powdery bloom stand out wherever they are especially against the dark background of a hedge or other shrubs. The new year will be arriving soon bringing whatever it will and I would like to say thank you tho those who read my ramblings for your support. Best wishes wishes for 2017. Though Bryant urges you to stay for one more hour of "jest and song" don't tarry too long lest you meet the boys in blue!



The salon also offers apprenticeships, creating more job opportunities



Jamie-Leigh Bird offers all the city salon treatments for customers in her home town

Time for a little pampering in the dark days of January

Report by Sophie Madden

JANUARY is the perfect time for a beauty overhaul but with so many treatments out there, it can be hard to know where start.

But one boutique beauty salon in Shifnal has the answers for 2017.

House of Beauty salon owner Jamie-Leigh Bird offers all the city salon treatments from the Shropshire market town salon and has people travelling from all over the county and further afield for her beauty advice.

And with the salon set to undergo a refurbishment for 2017, there will be even more available for customers.

The beauty industry is ever changing, whether it's new treatments or new trends, says Jamie-Leigh.

"We at House of Beauty feel it's so important to keep on top with a fast growing industry.

"We make sure we offer big city experiences to our clients, bringing exclusive London treatments to them.

"We as women not only want to feel a million dollars but look it."

In 2016, House of Beauty, on Bradford Street, saw some big changes within the company and 2017 looks set to be its best year yet.

Grooming

"We are updating our website marketing materials and having a complete refurbishment in our Shifnal salon," Jamie-Leigh said.

"We also have lots of exciting new treatments for our customers including male grooming, luxury feet and hand treatments and microblading for eyebrows."

Later in the year, the salon is set to install a new styling bar, offering blow dries, hair up alongside in-house make-up artists.

"We want to give our clients the full package," added Jamie-Leigh. "It's very important to me that my clients feel welcomed and leave with a positive and empowered experience. The experience is my top priority in my business. It's not just about the decor or new treatment but lies within our staff."

House of Beauty opened in 2012 as the long-held dream of Jamie-Leigh.

The 29-year-old mother-of-three worked hard to get the salon up and running after she became frustrated by the standard of service or the lack of availability of certain treatments here in Shropshire.

For Jamie-Leigh, training her staff and giving them the best opportunities to improve is of vital importance.

She said: "I have an amazing team of whom I am very proud. I want to make sure my girls have the best training and are looked after well.

"I want to offer people the chance to join the beauty industry and offer apprenticeships creating more job opportunity in our local communities.

"I have been able to expand the team and provide opportunities to other people by offering apprenticeships but they know they will only succeed if they reach my standard



An expert service from head to toe is offered at House of Beauty in Shifnal



Fully trained beauticians offer a range of treatments

because my business is all about consistency.

"However, finding the right staff has been one of the biggest issues and barriers to growing the business.

"Young girls often want to leave home and head for the big cities because they believe that's where the opportunities are, but we offer the boutique salon career right here in Shropshire.

"To achieve the standard my customers deserve, I now train all of my own staff as I just couldn't recruit experienced people who could offer what I wanted."

So what do House of Beauty customers love about the salon and what brings them to Shifnal – many of whom travel more than 30 miles for the specialist treatments?

"A lot of my customers want to take a couple of hours out of their busy life to indulge in luxury – they want to walk out feeling radiant and that's what we do," said Jamie-Leigh. "From eyelashes, brows, permanent make-up, luxury tanning and perfect nails to specialist treatments including Botox and lip fillers we certainly achieve that and more.

"When carrying out such luxury treat-



Customers can indulge in a range of luxury treatments

ments, it is imperative that the beautician oozes confidence in her job and that in turn gives the customer confidence."

But Jamie-Leigh knows the beauty world is fast moving and she is determined to be ahead of the game.

She said: "We launched our new specialist treatment last month, which is microblading.

"The microblading technique creates hair strokes which look as natural as real eyebrows."

For more information, visit www.houseof-beautyshifnal.com or call (01952) 270704.

Sleep tight for success in new year ambitions

WHAT'S the plan for 2017 – to get fit, lose weight and generally be healthier? Or perhaps, you want to get a new job and be more organised?

If you want to achieve any of the above, then there's one New Year resolution you really need to stick to and that's reclaiming good quality sleep.

Modern life has impacted our relationship with sleep so much that half of British adults admit to having problems falling asleep.

"And lack of sleep has a detrimental knock-on effect on our whole body," says sleep expert at Warren Evans bed makers, Dave Gibson.

"The first thing which happens is that we start to become moody and irritable, and start to get a foggy head, with our short-term memory, ability to plan and to make decisions and rational judgments all affected by lack of sleep.

"But it's not just our attention levels and cognitive processes that are affected, lack of sleep is a critical factor in relation to energy levels.

"Not adequately resting can lead to a decrease in energy levels – our energy stores are lowered, especially when our immune system is working hard (like when it's fighting infection) as it tries to borrow energy from other parts of your energy stores – making us feel tired in the day."

"Our weight, appetite and fat storage tend to be changed too, and we get cravings for energy-dense foods such as fat and carbohydrates – something to think about, especially if weight loss is on the agenda."

Considering all of this, you are much more likely to keep your New Year resolutions when your brain function is at its optimum and your energy levels are good.

Whether it's sticking to a new diet, stopping smoking, keeping fit or generally being more organised you will find it much easier when your brain and body is well rested from continuous and good quality sleep.

Here are Dave Gibson's five top tips to help you re-master the art of falling asleep in 2017:

1. Establish a Healthy Sleep Routine – go back to your factory sleep settings. Are you a night owl or morning lark?

Listen to your body and get back to night and day. At the very least, ensure you have a regular sleep pattern, your brain likes habits and getting to sleep is made easier when you follow a routine.

2. Make Your Bedroom a Modern-day Cave – Think dark and cool, you need a bedroom with a balanced temperature, around 15.5 – 20 degrees centigrade is good.

Darkness is key so try to eliminate all light, try using black out blinds if you find the early morning light waking you up and reduce all noise. Keeping your bedroom clean, clutter-free will also help.

3. Get Your Bed Sorted – People with uncomfortable beds, which can cause aches and back pain, sleep on average one hour less each night, the Sleep Assessment & Advisory Service in Edinburgh has found.

Deep sleep does not start until after the first 90 minutes of rest, so if you wake up every two hours due to a poor mattress, you are not getting enough deep sleep. To ensure you get a restful and rejuvenating night's sleep invest in a good mattress that is right for you (and your partner).

4. Eat Right for Sleep – Our digestive system and our sleep are inextricably linked, with both when and what we eat and drink directly impacting on our quality of sleep.

Our gut contains 90 per cent of the body's serotonin, over 50 per cent of the body's dopamine and 400 times more melatonin than the pineal gland.

These hormones play vital roles in mood and sleep. Eat a varied diet with foods containing nutrients such as tryptophan, magnesium and vitamin D and eating your last big meal about four (and at least two) hours before you go to sleep... and avoid stimulants such as caffeine and sugar after lunch.

5. Meditate & Relax – Stress is one of the biggest factors stopping Brits from falling and staying asleep.

Our drive to stay constantly connected with work and tech means we start and finish the day loaded with stress and adrenaline – so having a device deadline an hour before sleep is advised.

Practicing mindfulness and learning simple yet effective meditation and relaxation techniques will help get your mind and body into a good place for sleep.

Warren Evans and Dave Gibson, have created a free sleep guide called, The Art of Falling Asleep, giving you simple, easy to follow advice and techniques to help you fall asleep and stay asleep.

Find out more at www.warren-evans.com/sleep-tips/





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A glowing report for caravan park

Kirsty Smallman

visits Holgates Caravan Park in Silverdale

I'm setting you a challenge today – name a UK holiday site where you could not fault anything or suggest any improvements. It's a tough one isn't it?

This year's holiday destination was Cumbria – Holgates Caravan Park in Silverdale to be precise and within 24 hours it received the glowing title of number one caravan site from my husband.

And that's some title as we've been touring for three years and travelled hundreds of miles across the UK visiting dozens of sites – there's always something they could improve on.

We also both enjoyed touring caravan holidays as children with our parents so had fond memories of some super sites all those years ago to compare too.

First impression is key and already the friendly staff at the family owned site of Silverdale had won us over by telling us to go and choose our pitch for our touring caravan.

Perfect

They don't allocate them but rather let the customer choose their own – perfect! This system (which we had not experienced anywhere else) means if you want to be by the play park you go there and if you don't enjoy hearing kids play and don't want boys and girls going past on their bikes then you go as far away as possible. Simple! Drive around and at your leisure choose the one which suits you best!

We went for a pitch opposite the park knowing it would become the second home for our five year old and seven year old boys. Pulling them away to go out for the day was a task within itself – they made friends and made many memories. You know children are having a good time when they ask when we can go back there again before we've even left!

The site allows tents and caravans in close proximity which is great for friends holidaying together and with camping pods and holiday homes too they cater for everyone.

We particularly loved the layout of the site – no caravans in rows but rather plenty of green space surrounding the various pitches which were on angles and meant gazing into each other's caravan because you are directly opposite was avoided.

With a 17m heated swimming pool with bubble pool, turbo seat, spa pool and toddlers pool, and sauna and steam rooms, gym, bowling and pitch and putt, a games room and soft play area and two outdoor adventure playgrounds and a great restaurant and bar, all surrounded by 100 acres of woodland and countryside in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, there was no doubt it deserved the title of the company's flagship park.

With my parents in tow who stayed in a guesthouse in the nearby village of Arnside we enjoyed the area with two day trips to Bowness on Windermere <http://www.visitcumbria.com/amb/bowness-on-windermere/> with a special trip to the World of Beatrix Potter Attraction <http://www.hop-skip-jump.com/> on what would have been the author's 100th birthday.

We also enjoyed a tour around the area, including her home, on the way back from a bike ride to see where she was so heavily inspired.

Looking at the idyllic countryside you could easily see why the author fell in love with the Lakes.

Activities

With two bike crazy boys we enjoyed a trip to Grizedale Forest <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/grizedale> with a day of mountain biking, whilst my parents enjoyed the walking routes. We all enjoyed the coffee and cake afterwards!

We also had friends enjoying the Lake District at the same time and we closely watched their activities and destinations through the power of social media and it was clear we needed at least another week or multiple holiday trips to even touch the surface of the tourism opportunity using Silverdale as our perfect base.

We had a fantastic time and were torn between enjoying the peace, tranquility and beauty of the site and nearby villages and touring the great Lakes and exploring the forests, fells and waterways – we wanted to do both. In seven days we enjoyed a combination of both – proudly enjoying every park activity but also enjoyed boat trips including the steamship Teal from Bowness Pier, bike rides, walks and plenty of food and drink – not forgetting the retail therapy.

It is clear to see from the minute you arrive at Holgates why the family has enjoyed 60 years of success and with who I believe were teenage grandchildren emptying bins and obviously carrying out their work with pride there is no doubt there's another 60 years of success to come.

You know where we are heading in our touring caravan next year.



Plenty of green space surround the various pitches at Holgates Caravan Park in Silverdale



There is a 17m heated swimming pool with bubble pool, turbo seat, spa pool and

Travel facts

- Holgates is a family owned business offering a range of parks to suit both families and couples looking for a holiday haven.
- The six parks all offer something different and are spread across the Bay coastline with locations both in North Lancashire and South Cumbria.
- The Silverdale site offers touring and motorhomes, camping and camping pods, static caravan hire and holiday home ownership.
- The Silverdale family orientated site is 20 minutes walk away from Silverdale; 30 minutes walk away from Arnside Village; a 15 minute drive away from 'the gateway to the Lakes' Kendal and a 40-minute drive away from Lake Windermere.
- For more information call the Holgates team on 01524 701 508. #
- Follow them on Twitter @Holgatescp or Like their Facebook page

Put driving skills to ultimate test

Specialist driving tours company, Classic Grand Touring, is organising three exhilarating ice-driving trips in Sweden in February 2017

Classic Grand Touring offers both bespoke and pre-arranged tours to the finest motoring events around the world, and ice driving is particularly popular – hence three departure dates for 2017.

Managing Director, Thomas Brimblecombe, said: "Ice driving is certainly not for the faint-hearted – driving flat out on a frozen lake in the middle of Sweden really tests your driving skills – but it's by far the most fun you can have on four wheels!" Situated close to the border with Norway, the stunning frozen lake where the trips take place is near the tiny village of Rorbäcksnas, not far from the ski resort of Salen, Sweden.

All guests have two full days of ice driving on the lake including rally car sessions in either a Subaru or Mitsubishi. Initial tuition is with a professional driving coach in three different cars – a front-wheel drive (FWD), a rear-wheel drive (RWD) and a four-wheel drive (4WD), in order to gain the best experience possible.



Ice driving is certainly not for the faint-hearted

Guests are then free to enjoy the various cars all day long. At the end of the weekend, there is a timed test to assess how well everyone has mastered the art of driving at speed on ice. Guests also have the chance to try out some ice go-karting. These three-night trips cost from £1,350 pp (two sharing), including B&B accommodation at the Kjolen Hotel (just over the border in Norway), two full days' driving on the lake including rally car sessions (in a Subaru or

Mitsubishi), professional driving tuition on the lake, use of ice go-karts, airport & lake transfers, two lunches & three dinners, plus return flights to Oslo International (London Gatwick).

The three trips in 2017 are from 7 to 10 February, 10 to 13 February and 13 to 16 February.

For more information, or to book, call Classic Grand Touring on 01483 281 282 or visit www.classicgt.co.uk



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Mon 6 Feb	4 Ostend Special Breakaway...	£119
Fri 10 Feb	4 Disneyland Spectacular at Dream Castle	£339
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Sat 27 May	Longleaf Safari Park, Jungle Cruise & Windsor	£99
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Sat 3 Jun	Polar Bears, Penguins & Kingdom of Ice	£99
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Mother is still haunted by the murder of her sons 15 years on

A WOMAN whose two sons were murdered by her husband has told of how their brutal killings still haunt her 15 years on.

Denise Williams last saw her boys, Bradley, aged seven, and Brett, eight, in February 2002 in the back of a 4x4.

But that day, after her violent and abusive husband Steven Wilson punched her and released her from the car, he drove off and stabbed the two youngsters to death at Hill Top golf course, near Sandwell Valley.

The killer, aged 44, from Linden Avenue, Great Barr, hung himself a year later on Mother's Day - five days into a life sentence after being found guilty of murder.

Speaking about the ordeal more than a decade on, Ms Williams recalled the moment she had to identify her two dead boys.

Horrible

She said: "I remember just seeing your children through glass like they are in a fish tank. I identified the bodies, it was horrible, absolutely horrible, really hard. And those are the things that I have to live through now. Even though it has been 14 years you still have the bad dreams and the things you have experienced."

Ms Williams, who now uses her maiden name, met Wilson when she was 16. She recalled how the relationship was great but within a matter of months it went downhill. She said: "He treated me like a princess, put me on a pedestal. Six months in and he started to show his true colours."

"But he knew I had nowhere to go, no-one to run to. He called me all the different names under the sun. He would verbally abuse me,



Denise Williams last saw her boys Brett in a car in February 2002



Steven Wilson



Bradley Wilson, left, and his brother Brett

mentally abuse me, physically abuse me, punch me, kick me."

Amid the violence the couple had two young sons, Brett who was born in 1993 and Bradley, who was born the following year.

Ms Williams believes just having them in her life made things bearable. She said: "Even though I was

living a horrible life of abuse and putting up with drunken outbursts, just having the children seemed to make it all okay."

She had split with Wilson on several occasions due to his abuse and that tragic day in February 2002 came days after she had walked away from him for the final time.

They were all due to meet up at a restaurant, when Wilson launched his last attack on his wife in the car.

She said: "As I turned to get out the car, he pulled me, pulled my hair and pulled it into his lap in the car. He started punching the left side of my face, so me panicking managed to find the horn on the car and kept my hand on the horn of the car and also found the handle on the car door, which I pushed open."

"He panicked when I was blowing the horn on the car and he loosed me and then he drove off. That was the last I saw of the boys."

Ms Williams then described the unforgettable phone call she had from Wilson.

She said: "He rang to tell me 'I have just killed the kids and I'm going to kill myself'."

Corner

"At that point, you think to listen for the boys, listen for the boys in the background can you hear them, can you hear them and I couldn't hear them."

Her hopes were initially lifted when police claimed they had found her boys, but what she did not realise, until a moment later, was that they were not alive.

She said: "The sergeant of the station said 'Denise we have found the boys,' and gosh I was so excited, in the corner of this room was a big box of toys, and I was going to go and fetch them so they can come and play with the toys."

"He just knelt on the floor and he said to me Denise they're dead."

Ms Williams had to relive the horror of the experience a year later when the details were read out at Wilson's trial. After the killer was convicted, she admitted she only felt "relief" when days later it was confirmed he had hung himself in prison.

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We love to make people happy

He organised a 90th birthday party for Nelson Mandela and married then divorced both Chrissie Hynde and Patsy Kensit.

He leads the most famous Scottish band of all time – Simple Minds have shipped more than 40 million records, scored five number one hits and headlined Wembley Stadium – and also owns a hotel in Sicily. But these days, Jim Kerr doesn't even get recognised when he steps out of his Glasgow flat in the city's south side. It's funny how life changes as you get older. Don't You Forget About Jim.

Jim Kerr is one of the nicest and most erudite men in rock, though some of his ex-band mates might not think so. They'll be back on the road in spring – they headline Birmingham's Symphony Hall on May 17 – but before that there's the small matter of their beautifully conceived and perfectly formed acoustic album.

Simple Minds Acoustic features 15 re-worked tunes from their Imperial Era. There's Chelsea Girl, a reimagined Don't You (Forget About Me) and Glittering Prize and there's a reworked version of Promised You A Miracle, featuring KT Tunstall, alongside a soft-strummed-but-still-ballsy Alive And Kicking. Who knew acoustic music could still sound, well, B.I.G?

Promo

Fans have been asking for an acoustic album since the dawn of time but, until now, he's manfully resisted. Simple question: what changed?

"To be honest, we've been getting asked for this kind of thing since back in the great MTV Unplugged days. It's always been in the air but one of the things that we were always trying to do was to look at new things. We're not great at looking back.

"It came about when we were doing the promo for the last album, Big Music, and Chris Evans, on Radio 2, got us in. He had been a real big fan. He told us to go in and do two or three songs acoustically.

"We bit the bullet and at 7am on the morning we busked about two or three songs."

The reaction was overwhelming. Chris's 11 million listeners were Mad For It, to coin a phrase made popular by Patsy Kensit's subsequent husband. And sure as night follows day, every radio station across Europe wanted a repeat.

Two or three songs on the radio is, of course, different to recording 15 for an album. The idea of an acoustic album was duly shelved and Simple Minds got on with Big Music, their superlative 2014 offering. But while it was easy to ignore the requests to play songs for radio, it was harder to

ignore requests backed with hard cash.

"We were to-ing and fro-ing and then our manager came up to us in the January and, as always, money talks. He said a promoter in Switzerland wanted us to play up a mountain. And he wanted us to play acoustically. So we thought 'great'.

But getting one of Britain's great stadium bands to make music suited to a wine bar wasn't easy. How do you put the Hey, Hey, Hey, Hey-yeah, of Don't You (Forget About Me) on at an acoustic club? Not without reason were Simple Minds lauded for their stadium-friendly anthems.

Jim laughs. "We flitted through songs that we were sure would never work. We had always been swept away with production and a big sound. But when we just went down to the song, I didn't realise there was so much underneath."

Test

They booked a gig in London, deciding to test their acoustic set on unsuspecting fans at Hackney Empire.

"Talk about winging it. People from all over the world wanted to see that and we'd never done it before. Talk about being in it at the deep end. We were totally vulnerable.

"There's a kind of prejudice whenever you say the word 'acoustic'. People imagine two blokes on some stool surrounded by candles. But we didn't want to be little. We've got this thing of having energy and passion on stage. It's acoustic but it's a Simple Minds version, which is dynamic and atmospheric and all of that stuff."

And yet, it could all have been so different. There was a time not so many years ago when Simple Minds couldn't get arrested. They were yesterday's men. All washed up. Out of the game. They'd gone from having three consecutive number one platinum albums, followed by two that reached number two, to scratching about at numbers 141 and 80.

Radar

It would have been easier to call it a day. Jim could have spent his days at his hotel, the Villa Angela, in Sicily. Or, if performance was an itch he really did have to scratch, he could have taken one of the humungous cheques on offer for signing up to an 80s tour.

"We don't have a grudge to bear or anything. For a lot of people Simple Minds were off the radar for a long time and it's hard to get back on it when you've been off it."

So how did they do it? Jim's answer is simple: "Hard work. We've worked the last 10-12 years trying to do quality stuff. A lot of people have wondered why we'd bothered. But we love our story and the position we're in and we love our catalogue. We have different types of fans and for the hardcore, they want to see the band evolving."

Andy Richardson



Simple success – the band formed in the late 1970s



Don't you forget – Charlie Burchill with Jim Kerr



Great minds – five number one albums

Lucky Sevenfold's dreams come true



Californian rockers Avenged Sevenfold promise a spectacular show involving space and artificial intelligence when they play

BACK when they were 17, they dreamed of headlining festivals and playing alongside Metallica.

Eighteen years later, Avenged Sevenfold are friends with Metallica and have headlined Download Festival.

The Californian rock giants play the Genting Arena in Birmingham on Friday, January 13, supported by heavy metal icons Disturbed. They first performed in the UK in 2004. "Ever since then, the UK has been a special place for us," said lead singer Matt 'M' Shadows.

Of that first tour - which saw the group play the O2 Academy in Birmingham - he says: "We had a little Sprinter van, in which we would spend nine or 10 hour

drives just staring at each other. Then we'd hop out and play a show." Though Matt looks the hardened rocker, with his muscular tattooed body, he is also a devoted father. "I've got a two-year-old and a four-year-old. The four-year-old comes with us to shows but the two-year-old's a maniac - he's just nuts," laughed Matt.

Looking to the band's Birmingham show, Matt said the band had come up with something 'completely different'. "We've worked on something using space and artificial intelligence. We're super excited because the UK is going to be the first place to experience it. We'll be locked and loaded and ready for the show."

For the full interview by Kirsten Rawlins, visit www.expressandstar.com/entertainment/

Boss praises bluesy Ana

GUITAR-SLINGING blues songstress Ana Popovic brings her smoky blend of funk, jazz and blues to Bilston's Robin 2 venue on Tuesday.

She has been described as 'one helluva a guitar player' by Bruce Springsteen and ZZ Top's Billy Gibbons said 'Ana rocks the blues in fine, fine fashion'. The 40-year-old Serbian singer has been nominated for five Blues Music Awards and is a major star on the contemporary blues scene. Her albums, including Still Making History, Can You Stand The Heat and Unconditional, have featured in the US blues charts. She joined the likes of Buddy Guy, Eric Johnson and Zakki Wilde on the recent tribute tour celebrating the music of Jimi Hendrix.

Ana now lives in Memphis USA but was born in Belgrade. She grabbed her father's guitar at the age of 15 and began learning from his impressive blues and soul record collection.

She formed her first band, Hush, 20 years ago in Belgrade but the group disbanded after she left her homeland to study jazz in the Netherlands. Soon afterwards she was contributing to a Hendrix tribute album alongside Taj Mahal and former Animals frontman Eric Burdon. She released her first solo album, Hush!, on a German label. Her love of the blues led her to America.

Ana is endorsed by Fender and has shared stages with BB King, Buddy Guy, Joe Bonamassa and many others. Her latest album, Trilogy, was released last May. Tickets cost £15 in advance or £17 on the door and the venue opens at 7.30pm. Visit www.therobin.co.uk or call 01902 401211.

Ex-Deep Purple star ready to rock Robin

ROCKER Glenn Hughes is to return to the West Midlands later this month.

Cannock-born singer Hughes, of legendary band Deep Purple and the voice of The KLF's hit What Time Is Love?, is to take to the stage at the Robin 2 venue in Bilston on Monday, January 23.

The US-based rock star, who also fronted popular early 1970s Wolverhampton band Trapeze, in recent years was singer and bassist with rock supergroup Black Country Communion.

Hughes will be supported by Wall-ban band Stone Broken who were voted runners-up in the Best New Band category of the annual Planet Rock Awards 2016. The first band are on stage at 8pm.

Tickets cost £22.50 in advance or £24.50 on the door. Contact the box office on 01902 401 211 or visit www.therobin.co.uk

Lots of dance delight with the Strictly stars

STRICTLY Come Dancing The Live Tour kicks off in Birmingham on Friday, January 20, with five performances over three days.

These feature stars of the 2016 show, including Ed 'Gangnam Style' Balls and glitterball winner Ore Oduba with his new dancer partner Karen Clifton.

There is lots more dance delight in the offing for ballroom and latin fans this month. Brendan Cole brings his new show All Night Long to Wolverhampton Grand Theatre on January 26.

Then Anton du Beke and Erin Boag are joined by Strictly singer Lance Ellington for Swing Time at the Symphony Hall, Birmingham, on January 28.

Ballet fans can look forward to the annual visit by the Russian State Ballet of Siberia to the Grand, February 5 to 7, with The Nutcracker, Swan Lake and Coppelia.

Busy gig scene sees 2017 get off to a flyer

GOSSIP Girl actress Taylor Momsen brings her band The Pretty Reckless to Birmingham's O2 Institute next Friday, January 20, and Irish indie rockers Two Door Cinema Club have sold out their concert at the O2 Academy in the second city on January 24.

White Buffalo, AKA Jake Smith, plays the Institute 2 on January 21, the same night King Creosote (Kenni Anderson) is at Birmingham Town Hall. Watch out for rising star Declan McKenna at the Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath, on January 25.

Major concerts for blues fans include Ana Popovic (see above) at the Robin 2 on Tuesday and the Bilston venue then hosts the Aynsley Lister Band on Thursday and Lil' Jimmy Reed on January 24.

Finally, veteran Aussie guitar great Tommy Emmanuel performs his It's Never Too Late album at Birmingham Town Hall on January 20.

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CHOICE



Tom Hardy

Taboo (BBC1, 9.15pm)
James Delaney's shocking return to London society has set tongues wagging, but the swarthy adventurer's mission is far from complete. The city's residents view him with hostility and suspicion, but undeterred by their derision, James begins to enlist allies in his quest to reclaim his legacy and establish a new life for himself. However, an unexpected arrival at the reading of his father's will threatens to disrupt James's plans, and the true, poisonous nature of his new-found inheritance makes itself known. Historical drama, starring Tom Hardy, Leo Bill, Jessie Buckley, Oona Chaplin, Richard Dixon, Mark Gatiss, Jefferson Hall and David Hayman.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **10.00 Saturday Kitchen.** **11.30 The Best Dishes Ever.** (R) **12.00 Football Focus.** **1.00 BBC News.** Weather. **1.15 Bargain Hunt.** (R) **2.15 Wanted Down Under.** (R) **3.15 Escape to the Country.** (R) **4.00 Final Score.** **5.20 BBC News.** **5.30 Regional Programme.** **5.40 Celebrity Mastermind.**
6.10 Pointless Celebrities. Jilly Golden, Oily Smith, Sophie Grison Michael Caines. (R) **7.00 Let It Shine.** Graham Norton and Mel Giedroyc's mission to assemble a new boyband for a nation-touring musical continues. This time, the hopeful stars continue with their solo auditions in front of a studio audience in Manchester. Judges Gary Barlow, Dannii Minogue, Martin Kemp and Amber Riley must decide whether any of the would-be pop princes are worthy of a place in Let It Shine's five-strong headline act, while Graham and Mel keep viewers up to date with all the backstage action, fun and gossip.
8.25 Casualty. A scuffle at an illegal rave leads an over-enthusiastic sergeant causing serious head injuries to a 19-year-old man and later planting drugs in his belongings to corroborate his claim that he had been assaulted twice by his quarry. Jacob is dubious about the sergeant's story and takes a police constable to one side in an attempt to persuade her not be an accomplice to her superior's crooked ways. Elsewhere, Ellie's career is on the line as Connie goes on the warpath.
9.15 Taboo. James Delaney sets about enlisting allies to help him reclaim his legacy, but an unexpected arrival at the reading of his father's will threatens to disrupt his plans.
10.15 BBC News. Weather; National Lottery Update.
10.30 Match of the Day. Gary Lineker presents action from the latest Premier League matches, including Leicester City v Chelsea at the King Power Stadium and Swansea City v Arsenal at the Liberty Stadium.
12.00 Film: The Ring. (2002) **1.45** Weather for the Week Ahead. **1.50** BBC News.

BBC2

6.45 Film: Higher and Higher. (1943) Musical comedy, with Jack Haley and Frank Sinatra. **8.15 Film:** The Magic Box. (1951) Biopic of cinema pioneer William Friese-Greene, starring Robert Donat.
10.00 Secret Britain. (R) **11.00 Homes Under the Hammer.** (R) **12.00 Exploring China: A Culinary Adventure.** (R) **1.00 Film:** Ice Station Zebra. (1968) An American submarine crew races to reach a Soviet satellite that has crash-landed near a British research station in the Arctic. Adventure, with Rock Hudson and Patrick McGeehan. **3.20 Flog It!** (R) **4.00 Mastermind.** (R) **4.30 University Challenge.** (R) **5.00 Only Connect.** (R) **5.30 The World's Most Extraordinary Homes.** (R)
6.30 Thailand: Earth's Tropical Paradise. Exploring the forests, plains and bustling cities of Central Thailand, an area known as the nation's rice bowl. The programme explores how people live alongside animals in these areas, and the spiritual fulfillment to be found in these relationships. Narrated by Sophie Okonedo. (R)
7.30 Britain's Ancient Capital: Secrets of Orkney. Neil Oliver, Chris Packham, Andy Torbet and Shini Somara investigate recent archaeological finds on the archipelago that challenge the received wisdom on Stone Age Britain, joining hundreds of archaeologists from around the world who have gathered in the Orkneys at one of Europe's biggest digs. (R)
8.30 Dad's Army. Captain Mainwaring puts the defence of the realm before personal pride, resulting in him nearly losing command of the platoon. Classic comedy with the Home Guard, starring Arthur Lowe and John Le Mesurier. (R)
9.00 Imagine: Marlon Brando. Alan Yentob presents another documentary from the worlds of art and culture.
10.40 Film: On the Waterfront. (1954) A former boxer reduced to working for a gangster has his conscience pricked when he sees his boss's thugs kill a man. Drama, starring Marlon Brando, Lee J Cobb and Eva Marie Saint.
12.25 Film: Lay the Favorite. (2012) A Las Vegas cocktail waitress proves a success as a professional gambler, but arouses the jealousy of her mentor's wife. Comedy, starring Rebecca Hall. **1.50** This is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Grizzly Tales for Gruesome Kids. **6.10 Grizzly Tales for Gruesome Kids.** (R) **6.25 Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures.** (R) **6.35 Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures.** (R) **6.45 Sooty.** (R) **6.55 Signed Stars: Share a Story.** (R) **7.00 Super 4.** (R) **7.15 Oddbods.** (R) **7.20 Oddbods.** (R) **7.30 Scrambled!** Scrambled! **7.35 Scrambled!** Mr Bean: The Animated Series. (R) **7.55 Scrambled!** Horrid Henry. (R) **8.10 Scrambled!** The Powerpuff Girls. (R) **8.30 Scrambled!** Bear Grylls Survival School. **9.05 Scrambled!** Adventure Time. (R) **9.25 ITV News.** **9.30 Rebound.** (R) **10.25 Guess This House.** (R) **11.25 Judge Rinder.** (R) **12.30 ITV News.** Weather. **12.40 River Monsters.** (R) **1.10 Bargain Shop Wars.** (R) **1.40 Film:** The Mummy Returns. (2001) Fantasy adventure sequel, starring Brendan Fraser. **4.05 Dance Dance Dance.** (R) **5.35 Regional Programme.** Weather. **5.45 ITV News.** Weather.
6.00 The Brits Are Coming.
7.00 Ninja Warrior UK. Competitors from across the UK test their strength, speed and courage in this obstacle-course challenge, hosted by Ben Shepherd, Rochelle Humes and Chris Kamara.
8.00 The Voice UK. The spinning-chair singing contest continues, as another selection of would-be stars put their musical skills to the test via the ears of new coach line-up Jennifer Hudson, Gavin Rossdale, Will.i.am and Tom Jones, who are tasked with selecting more acts to champion in the blind auditions. Sitting with their backs to the prospective pop-pops, the coaches select the ones they like based on their vocal abilities alone, but as always, it remains to be seen whether this batch of contestants will have what it takes to reach the end of the contest and claim that lucrative record contract with Polydor. Emma Willis is on hand to oversee proceedings.
9.30 Through the Keyhole. Keith Lemon channels Eamonn Holmes, Emma Bunton and Jonathan Ross to guess the identities of the celebrities whose homes he peruses.
10.30 ITV News. Weather.
10.45 Film: Terminator 2: Judgment Day. (1991) Sci-fi adventure sequel.
1.15 Jackpot247. **3.00 Who's Doing the Dishes?** (R) **3.50** ITV Nightscreen.

CHANNEL 4

6.15 The King of Queens. (R) **6.40 The King of Queens.** (R) **7.05 Everybody Loves Raymond.** (R) **7.30 Everybody Loves Raymond.** (R) **8.00 Everybody Loves Raymond.** (R) **8.30 Frasier.** (R) **9.30 The Big Bang Theory.** (R) **10.00 The Big Bang Theory.** (R) **10.25 The Big Bang Theory.** (R) **10.55 The Simpsons.** (R) **11.25 The Simpsons.** (R) **11.55 Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA.** (R) **12.55 Jamie and Jimmy's Friday Night Takeaway.** (R) **2.00 Darts: BDO Lakeside World Professional Championships.** The eighth day of the BDO World Championships.
6.30 Channel 4 News.
7.00 Penelope Keith's Hidden Villages. Penelope Keith starts her journey in the Cotswolds, and explores the celebrated village of Bibury, as well as Kelmscott, the home of William Morris; Slade, the village setting of a book by Laurie Lee; Down Ampney, and Hook Norton. Plus, she visits a village late in Easington. (R)
8.00 Great Canal Journeys. Timothy West and Penelope Keith embark on more watery adventures, beginning 14 miles west of Venice on the Brenta, a river that was first canalised in the 13th century. Lined with palaces which were once holiday homes for Venetian royalty, they follow the route that Casanova and Lord Byron took to the city. After crossing the Venetian lagoon, Tim and Pru arrive at St Mark's Square, where they escape the busy Grand Canal and discover the tranquility and beauty of the smaller canals that tourists rarely see. (R)
9.00 Film: Oblivion. (2013) A repairman is assigned to salvage the remaining resources from Earth, which has been left a devastated wasteland after a war with an alien race. He discovers a human survivor on the surface of the planet, an encounter that exposes secrets from the past that threaten the future of the human race. Sci-fi adventure, starring Tom Cruise and Morgan Freeman.
11.30 Film: Immortals. (2011) A man is chosen by the Greek gods to prevent a power-mad king from conquering the human and immortal worlds. Mythological adventure, with Henry Cavill.
1.35 Hollyoaks. **3.35 Win It Cook It.** (R) **4.05 Hoarder SOS.** (R) **5.00 Location, Location, Location.** (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake! **9.10 The Fairly OddParents.** (R) **9.45 Big Bash Cricket Live.** **1.30 The Hotel Inspector.** (R) **2.30 Bugdies Make You Laugh Out Loud.** (R) **3.30 Dogs Make You Laugh Out Loud 2.** (R) **4.25 Dogs Make You Laugh Out Loud 3.** (R) **5.25 Kittens Make You Laugh Out Loud.** (R)
6.25 NCIS: Los Angeles. Sam goes undercover as a bomb specialist when he investigates the death of a demolition expert, but faces a race against time to find explosives located across LA.
7.10 NCIS: Los Angeles. The team investigates when a reporter is murdered as she prepares to break a story about a mysterious Libyan freedom fighter named El-Libi.
8.00 NCIS. Gibbs throws himself back into his work following his near-death experience, updating his appearance and tackling a new risky case alongside DEA agent Luis Mitchell, who wants help bringing down a drugs cartel. Concerned about his colleague's apparent enthusiasm to re-enter the field, DiNozzo discovers Mitchell is the son of a former NCIS agent who gave his life trying to save Gibbs' late wife and daughter, and this attachment is causing Gibbs to break his own rule against personal involvement in a case. However, danger is posed by Benson Long, the cartel's head, and Mitchell's top target.
8.55 5 News Weekend.
9.00 Football on 5: The Championship. George Riley and Lynsey Higrave introduce action from the latest fixtures, which included Bristol City v Cardiff city at Ashton Gate, Fulham v Barnsley at Craven Cottage, and Rotherham United v Norwich City at ASESSEAL New York Stadium.
10.00 Football on 5: Goal Rush. George Riley and Lynsey Higrave introduce all the goals from the latest matches in League One and Two, including Walsall v Sheffield United, and Plymouth Argyle v Stevenage.
10.30 Footy Big Brother. Highlights of the households' past 24 hours under the all-seeing eye of Big Brother.
11.30 Lip Sync Battle UK: Alexander Armstrong vs Jimmy Carr. (R)
12.00 SuperCasino. **3.05** Celebrity Big Brother. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Four
7.00 Timeshift: The Golden Age of Coach Travel **8.00** Inside Chernobyl's Mega Tomb **9.00** Lost Kingdoms of Central America **10.00** The Young Montalbano **11.45** Top of the Pops: 1983 **12.00** Elvis Costello: Mystery Dance **1.20** Late July Presents - Elvis Costello in Concert **2.20** Great Guitar Riffs at the BBC **3.20** Close ITV2
11.20 The Big Quiz - Worrier Street v Emmerdale **12.25** Ninja Warrior UK **1.30** 50 Greatest Harry Potter Moments **3.05** Film: Horrid Henry: The Movie (2011) **4.05** FYI Daily **4.10** Film: Horrid Henry: The Movie (2011) **4.55** FYI Daily **6.00** Film: The Amazing Spider-Man 2 (2014) **6.45** FYI Daily **7.50** Film: The Amazing Spider-Man 2 (2014) **9.30** Film: Wanted (2008) **10.30** FYI Daily **10.35** Film: Wanted (2008) **11.40** Family Guy **1.05** American Dad! **2.00** Dads **2.20** Sawford **3.00** Teleshopping
ITV3
11.25 Film: Hidden Treasure (2001) **1.30** A Touch of Frost **6.00** Midsomer Murders **8.00** Doc Martin **9.00** Midsomer Murders **11.00** Lewis **1.30** Blue Murder **2.00** ITV3 Nightscreen **2.30** Teleshopping
ITV4
11.00 Pawn Stars **11.30** Film: Apache (1954) **12.35** FYI Daily **12.40** Film: Apache (1954) **1.20** Nijinsky's Triple Crown **1.30** ITV Racing Live from Warwick and Kempton Park. Coverage of races from Warwick and Kempton Park. **4.00** Film: Red River (1948) **5.05** FYI Daily **5.10** Film: Red River (1948) **6.40** Pawn Stars **7.05** Mr Bean **8.10** River Monsters **9.15** Film: The Client (1994) **10.20** FYI Daily **10.25** Film: The Client (1994) **11.40** Film: Don't Say a Word (2001) **12.50** FYI Daily **12.55** Film: Don't Say a Word (2001) **2.00** Hell on Wheels **2.50** ITV4 Nightscreen
E4
11.00 Baby Daddy **12.00** Black-ish **1.00** Young & Hungry **2.00** The Goldbergs **4.00** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **5.00** The Big Bang Theory **9.00** Film: Friends with Benefits (2011) **11.15** Gogglebox **1.25** The Inbetweeners **2.25** Cheving Gum **2.50** Tattoo Fixers **3.45** Bad Robots **4.10** Suburgatory **4.50** Revenge
Film4
1.00 The Black Arrow (1948) **1.00** The Jane Austen Book Club (2007) **3.05** First Daughter (2004) **5.15** The Spy Next Door (2010) **7.00** Legend (1985) **9.00** The Family (2013) **11.15** Blue Bird (2014) **1.00** Bully (2011) **3.20** Closer

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Fri 10th - Mon 13th Mar - Comedy Weekend at Pontins, Sand Bay Resort - Daily Tea Dances, visit Highfields Garden Centre en route and Gloucester Quays shopping outlet on your return journey. ½ price drinks on one selected evening. Fantastic Value Break £96.00pp*

Sat 18th - Sun 19th Mar - Faulty Towers Comedy Show - London Weekend, 3 course meal included during your show. Based at the Quality Inn, Wembley. Optional evening's entertainment at the Irish Bar! We also take in historic Windsor on our journey to London. Fun weekend at only £149.50pp*

Fri 7th - Mon 10th Apr - The English Riviera - Babbacombe 4 days, 3 nights half Board at The De La Mer Hotel. Day excursions to Teignmouth, Brixham and Torquay are also included. We visit historic Exeter on our return journey. Only £176.00*

Fri 21st - Mon 24th Apr - Paris and Monet's Garden, 4 days, 3 nights B & B at the 4 star Novotel. Excursions to Paris, Monet's Garden and Giverny - Take in the serenity of the River Seine before relaxing in Paris. We also visit the former home of Claude Monet and its beautiful gardens. Includes Eurotunnel crossing - executive coach travel and admission to Monet's gardens. Only £245.00* Passport/Euro's required

Fri 26th - Monday 29th May - Hadrian's Wall and Bamburgh. Situated a stone's throw from Hadrian's Wall the Gisland Hall Hotel is an ideal base to explore the wonderful scenery. Your holiday includes visits to Carlisle, Gretna Green, the stunningly attractive village of Bamburgh famed for its castle and historic Lancaster on our journey home. Not to be missed - Only £245.00pp*

Fri 2nd - Mon 5th June - Brugge and Ypres - Brugge, the capital of West Flanders is distinguished by its canals, cobbled Streets and medieval buildings. Excursions to Ypres, Ghent and Ostend, Eurotunnel Crossing and taxes are all included in the cost of your holiday. Please join us as we witness the emotional Last Post at the Menin Gate. A memorable holiday for only £266.00pp*

Mon 24th - Fri 29th July - Waterford, Killarney & Dublin

Please join us for the 'Craic' as we take in the delights of the Emerald Isle. Based at the Evis-ton House Hotel in the heart of Killarney this is a great place to explore. We take in The Kingdom of Kerry, Dublin, Blarney Castle and much more. Whether it's Kissing the Blarney Stone or riding the famous Irish Jaunting Cars this is a holiday not to be missed. Only £416.00pp*

Fri 8th - Sun 10th Sept - Blackpool Illuminations and Fireworks Display 3 days - 2 nights half board at the ever popular Cam brae with entertainment - Free time in Blackpool - leisure time at the award winning Trentham Gardens on our return journey. Only £145.00pp* (Limited single rooms without supplement)

Fri 13th - Mon 16th Oct - Bournemouth Autumn Tints

Based at the historic Victorian Durlay Dean Hotel situated close to the award winning beach - 3 days - 2 nights half board - Excursions to Poole and Swanage - Free bar between 7 - 9pm - We also visit Winchester on our return Journey. Only £226.00pp*

Fri 17th - Mon 20th Nov - Turkey & Tinsel at the Monterey Beach Hotel

Christmas has come early as we enjoy the festivities at the Monterey Beach Hotel close to Lytham St Annes. Mince Pies, Crackers and a visit from Santa on this fun filled weekend. Complimentary drink - 4 day-3 nights' accommodation - Evening entertainment - We visit the award winning Trentham Gardens on our return journey to pick up your Mistletoe! Only £189.00* (Limited single rooms without supplement)

Mon 27th - Fri 1st Dec - Valkenburg Christmas Market

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CHOICE



Stephen McGann

Call the Midwife: The Casebook (BBC1, 5.05pm)
Stephen McGann presents a look at the true stories behind the drama series, meeting midwives, nuns and doctors who worked delivering babies during the 1950s and 1960s to hear their accounts of the social and medical changes of the period. He talks to a former colleague of Jennifer Worth, writer of the original Call the Midwife books, and a photographer who documented the social conditions of the time. Stephen also returns to the home where he was born to share his mother's own story of childbirth.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **7.30** Match of the Day. (R) **9.00** The Andrew Marr Show. **10.00** The Big Questions. **11.00** Regional Programme. **12.15** Bargain Hunt. (R) **1.00** BBC News: Weather. **1.15** Homes Under the Hammer. (R) **2.00** Wanted Down Under Revisited. (R) **2.45** Escape to the Country. (R) **3.30** Spy in the Wild. (R) **4.30** Songs of Praise. **5.05** Call the Midwife: The Casebook.
6.05 BBC News.
6.20 **Regional Programme.**
6.30 **Countryfile.** The programme comes from Carmarthenshire, where Matt Baker explores the history of the region's sand dunes and Helen Skelton visits the National Botanic Garden of Wales, where she discovers how bees are being prepared for winter and reports on a plan to map the DNA of all the UK's flowers. Plus, Falklands veteran Simon Weston presents a guide to South Wales, Tom Heap looks at how otters pose a threat to fisheries, and Adam Henson presents the second of two reports on farming in New Zealand. Including weather for the week ahead.
7.30 **Antiques Roadshow Holocaust Memorial.** Fiona Bruce and the team examine items connected to the Holocaust and listen to the personal stories of survivors. Plus, a look at the work of the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation.
8.30 **Still Open All Hours.** David Jason stars as Granville in this follow-up to Open All Hours, now running the shop with his son Leroy after inheriting the business from Arkwright.
9.00 **Sherlock.** Sherlock and John face their greatest challenge as the duo's long-buried secrets come to light and a threat from the past seems to have returned from the dead. They discover an elusive enemy has been playing a very long game – which is now reaching its devastating conclusion. Benedict Cumberbatch and Martin Freeman star in the conclusion of the fourth series of the detective drama. Last in the series.
10.30 BBC News.
10.50 **Regional Programme.**
11.00 **The Graham Norton Show.** (R) **11.45** **The Celebrity Apprentice USA.**
1.10 Weather for the Week Ahead. **1.15** BBC News.

BBC2

6.15 A to Z of TV Gardening. (R) **7.00** Big Dreams Small Spaces. (R) **8.00** An Island Parish. (R) **8.30** The Edible Garden. (R) **9.00** Countryfile. (R) **10.00** Saturday Kitchen Best Bites. **11.30** Talking Snooker. **12.15** MOTD2 Extra.
1.00 Live Snooker: The Masters. Ronnie O'Sullivan v Liang Wenbo. **5.15** Yellowstone: The Toughest Spring. (R)
6.15 **Ski Sunday.** Highlights of the men's World Cup downhill on the Lauberhorn in Wengen, Switzerland. Plus, a feature on Swiss freerider Jeremie Heitz.
7.00 **City in the Sky.** Dallas Campbell and Dr Hannah Fry present a documentary exploring aviation, beginning with a look at the challenges of getting aircraft into the air. The programme features a visit to the world's busiest airport to discover the work that goes into getting its millions of visitors off the ground. Plus, the construction of the world's largest passenger plane and the dangers of taking off from the coldest city on Earth. (R)
8.00 **Dragons' Den.** Evan Davis ushers another batch of would-be entrepreneurs before the panel's judgment. An inventor who claims to have created a new kind of surfboard and a parachute for Nasa reveals his idea for transforming the garden shed, Touker Suleyman agrees to road test a waxing product, and one applicant makes a shocking revelation as he tells the story of sleeping on his office floor.
9.00 **Thailand: Earth's Tropical Paradise.** The mountains and forests of Northern Thailand, where unusual partnerships develop between animals and people. Last in the series.
10.00 **Match of the Day 2.** Mark Chapman reviews the day's Premier League action, featuring Manchester United v Liverpool at Old Trafford and Everton v Manchester City at Goodison Park.
10.50 **QI XL.** Guests Matt Lucas, Jerry Springer and Carlad Lloyd join regular panellist Alan Davies and host Sandi Toksvig to contemplate the theme "noodles" in this extended episode.
11.35 **Snooker: The Masters.** Ding Junhui v Kyren Wilson. Hazel Irvine presents action.
12.25 Snooker: The Masters – Extra.
2.25 Sign Zone: Question Time. (R) **3.25** Holby City. (R) **4.25** This is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Grizzly Tales for Gruesome Kids. **6.10** Grizzly Tales for Gruesome Kids. (R) **6.25** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **6.35** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **6.45** Sooty. (R) **6.55** Signed Stories: Share a Story. (R) **7.00** Super 4. (R) **7.15** Oddbods. (R) **7.20** Oddbods. (R) **7.30** Scrambled!: Scrambled! **7.35** Scrambled!: Mr Bean: The Animated Series. (R) **7.55** Scrambled!: Horrid Henry. (R) **8.10** Scrambled!: The Powerpuff Girls. (R) **8.30** Scrambled!: Ultimate Spider-Man: Web Warriors. **9.05** Scrambled!: Adventure Time. (R) **9.25** ITV News. **9.30** Countryfile. (R) **10.00** Peston on Sunday. **11.00** Gino's Italian Escape: Hidden Italy. (R) **11.30** Chopping Block. (R) **12.30** ITV News: Weather. **12.35** Judge Rinder. (R) **1.35** Tipping Point. (R) **2.35** Ninja Warrior UK. (R) **3.35** The Voice UK. (R) **5.05** Regional Programme : Weather. **5.15** ITV News: Weather. **5.30** The Chase: Celebrity Special. (R)
6.30 **Dance Dance Dance.** Alesha Dixon and Will Best host the second stage of the celebrity dance contest, in which the contestants must impress judges Ashley Banjo, Tina Landon and Timor Steffens by recreating famous music videos by Christina Aguilera and Britney Spears – as well as a classic scene from the Blues Brothers.
8.00 **Endeavour.** The leader of a censorship campaign comes to Oxford on a speaking tour, and Morse is charged with protecting her in light of a series of death threats. A bricklayer working on a controversial pop singer's house is later found dead, and when a second killing occurs, a connection emerges to the speaker's movement, plunging Morse into the middle of a conflict over the nature of British culture.
10.00 ITV News: Weather.
10.15 **Peston on Sunday.** Political magazine, presented by Robert Peston, with ITV News National Editor Allegra Stratton. (R)
11.15 **The Brits Are Coming.** A special live show announcing which artists are in the running to receive gongs at this year's Brit Award ceremony. Includes performances by Olly Murs, Craig David and more. (R)
12.15 Jackpot247. Interactive gaming.
3.00 Chopping Block. (R) **3.50** ITV Nightscreen. **5.05** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R)

CHANNEL 4

6.20 The King of Queens. (R) **6.45** The King of Queens. (R) **7.10** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **7.35** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.00** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.30** Frasier. (R) **9.00** Frasier. (R) **9.30** Sunday Brunch. **12.30** The Simpsons. (R) **12.55** The Simpsons. (R) **1.25** The Simpsons. (R) **1.55** Film: St Trinian's 2: The Legend of Fritton's Gold. (2009) Comedy sequel, starring Rupert Everett. **3.55** Channel 4 News. **4.15** Darts: BDO Lakeside World Professional Championships. The men's final of the BDO World Championships.
8.00 **Walking the Americas.** The second leg of Levison Wood's four-month trek across Central America involves walking for 400 miles and travelling through three different countries. He visits a unique Caribbean town that is populated by the descendants of shipwrecked African slaves, treks through a mountain region, and makes his way through gang territories in one of the world's most violent cities.
9.00 **Film: Bad Neighbours.** (2014) Premiere. A couple living in suburbia and adjusting to new parenthood are determined to prove they can still be cool when a household of students moves in next door. However, when their raucous neighbours' wild parties disrupt their lives, they decide to fight back, leading to a vicious cycle of one-upmanship. Comedy, starring Seth Rogen, Zac Efron and Rose Byrne.
10.50 **8 Out of 10 Cats Does Countdown.** Jimmy Carr hosts, as Sean Lock and Stephen Mangan team up against Noel Fielding and Fay Ripley. The Brett Domino Trio assist Susie Dent in Dictionary Corner. (R)
11.55 **Film: Hanna.** (2011) A teenage girl trained by her father to be an assassin travels the world on a secret mission, pursued by the CIA. Action thriller, with Saoirse Ronan and Cate Blanchett.
1.55 How to Lose Weight Well. Dr Xand van Tulleken and dietician Hala El-Shafie help a duo slim down for a birthday bash in seven days, and water-only fasts are investigated. (R) **2.50** The Autistic Gardener. The team tries to make a small garden look bigger. (R) **3.45** Jamie's Comfort Food. Jamie Oliver prepares curried fish pie. **3.55** Location, Location. (R) **5.50** 3rd Rock from the Sun. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake!: Milkshake! Monkey. **6.05** Milkshake! Bop Box. (R) **6.10** Peppa Pig. (R) **6.15** Angelina Ballerina. (R) **6.25** Bob the Builder. (R) **6.40** Wanda and the Alien. (R) **6.50** Zack and Quack. (R) **7.00** Seaside Antics. (R) **7.05** Fireman Sam. (R) **7.15** Pip Ahoy! (R) **7.30** Little Princess. (R) **7.40** Paw Patrol. (R) **7.55** Blaze and the Monster Machines. (R) **8.25** Noddy in Toyland. (R) **8.40** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **8.55** Shimmer and Shine. (R) **9.20** Peppa Pig. (R) **9.30** Peppa Pig. (R) **9.40** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **9.55** The Fairy OddParents. (R) **10.30** Football on 5: The Championship. (R) **11.25** Football on 5: Goal Rush. (R) **12.00** Funniest Fails, Fails & Flops. (R) **12.25** Film: Message in a Bottle. (1999) Romantic drama, with Kevin Costner and Robin Wright. **2.50** Film: Six Days Seven Nights. (1998) Romantic adventure, starring Harrison Ford and Anne Heche. **4.45** Film: You've Got Mail. (1998) Romantic comedy, starring Tom Hanks and Meg Ryan.
7.00 **Now That's Funny!** A collection of internet-sourced videos with a family friendly hook, featuring laugh-out-loud unexpected personal moments now being shared with the world. (R)
8.00 **Brides Make You Laugh Out Loud.** Iain Lee narrates a collection of internet videos featuring bizarre and humorous weddings.
8.55 **5 News Weekend.**
9.00 **Celebrity Big Brother.** A chance to catch up with the latest events inside the house as the celebrities cope with living under constant surveillance, with all the arguments and alliances, as well as the revelations in the diary room.
10.05 **Celebrity Botched Up Bodies.** Alex Reid undergoes surgery on his nose to help his breathing, while Georgie Shore's Marnie Simpson discusses how her breast enhancement went badly wrong.
11.05 **The Roast of Donald Trump.** An event from 2011 in which the business mogul faces a barrage of insults from Seth MacFarlane, Gilbert Gottfried, Whitney Cummings, Snoop Dogg, Larry King and Marlee Matlin. (R)
12.35 Impractical Jokers UK. **1.00** SuperCasino. **3.10** Film: Under the Tuscan Sun. (2003) **4.50** Divine Designs. (R) **5.40** Angels of Jarm. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Four
7.00 David Starkey's Music & Monarchy
8.00 Sword, Musket & Machine Gun: Britain's Armed History **9.00** Rich Hall's Presidential Grudge Match **10.30** Bowie at the BBC **11.30** John Berger: The Art of Looking **12.25** Sound of Musicals with Neil Brand **1.25** Lost Kingdoms of Central America **2.25** Roger Banister: Everest on the Track **3.25** Clossie
ITV2
1.40 2Awesome: Side Effects **2.20** 2Awesome: Third Wheel **2.40** Jam (1996) **4.00** FYI Daily **4.05** Film: Space Jam (1996) **4.45** Film: Despicable Me 2 (2013) **5.45** FYI Daily **5.50** Film: Despicable Me 2 (2013) **6.45** Film: The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (2012) **7.45** FYI Daily **7.50** Film: The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (2012) **10.00** Family Guy **11.55** American Dad! **12.55** The Cleveland Show **1.50** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **2.15** Teleshopping **5.45** ITV2 Nightscreen
ITV3
2.05 A Touch of Frost **4.20** Film: Columbo: How to Dial a Murder (1978) **6.00** Midsomer Murders **8.00** This Time Next Year **9.00** Tonight at the London Palladium **10.00** Birds of a Feather **10.30** Film: The English Patient (1996) **11.35** FYI Daily **11.40** Film: The English Patient (1996) **1.40** A Touch of Frost **3.35** Film: The Best House Win **5.20** You're Only Young Twice **5.40** ITV3 Nightscreen
ITV4
3.35 Film: The Dam Busters (1954) **5.35** FYI Daily **5.40** Film: The Dam Busters (1954) **7.10** When Ali Came to Britain **8.15** Film: Police Academy 4: Citizens on Patrol (1987) **9.15** FYI Daily **9.20** Film: Police Academy 4: Citizens on Patrol (1987) **10.00** Film: Maximum Conviction (2012) **11.00** FYI Daily **11.05** Film: Maximum Conviction (2012) **12.05** River Monsters **1.10** Hell on Wheels **2.05** I Want That Car **2.55** ITV4 Nightscreen **3.00** Teleshopping
E4
2.20 Rude(ish) Tube Shorts **2.30** The Goldbergs **5.00** The Big Bang Theory **8.00** Film: Johnny English Reborn (2011) **10.05** Tattoo Fixers **11.10** Virtually Famous **12.00** The Inbetweeners **1.05** Gogglebox **2.10** Rude Tube: Ultimate Stunts **3.05** Rude Tube **Film4**
11.00 The Frogmans (1951) **1.00** One Fine Day (1996) **3.10** Sword of Sherwood Forest (1960) **4.50** Flight of the Navigator (1986) **6.35** Beautiful Creatures (2013) **9.00** Prometheus (2012)



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FILM CHOICES

MONDAY

Mother Betrayed, Channel 5, 3.20pm

Five years after her husband is run off the road and killed by a mysterious driver, the head of a prosperous architectural firm decides to remarry. However, she's unaware that her new spouse has a devious plan to steal her daughter, her sanity and even her life. Psychological thriller, starring Lynn Collins. (2015)

TUESDAY

Who Killed My Husband?, Channel 5, 3.15pm

A widowed police officer embarks on a dangerous mission to generate enough income to pay for her daughter's hospital bills, causing her to question how far she is willing to go to save her child. Thriller, starring Andrea Bowen and Jim Thorburn. (1900)

WEDNESDAY

What Doesn't Kill You, BBC1, 11.45pm

Two childhood friends become criminals in the employ of a Boston mobster, leading one to develop a drug habit that nearly costs him his wife and children. After a spell in prison, he resolves to make a fresh start as a devoted family man, but his friend tempts him with the promise of an armoured car robbery. Crime drama, starring Mark Ruffalo. (2008)



Reasonable Doubt, Friday, BBC1, 11.55pm

THURSDAY

Twisted Sisters, Channel 5, 3.15pm

College freshman Sarah joins her mother's former sorority, but comes to learn it is run like a ruthless business rather than a sisterhood, promoting cut-throat seduction and destruction behind the scenes. As a consequence, she soon finds herself caught up in a devious power game that forces her to question where her true loyalties lie. Drama, starring Sierra McCormick and Cassidy Gifford. (2016)

FRIDAY

Reasonable Doubt, BBC1, 11.55pm

District attorney Mitch Brocken is involved in a fatal hit-and-run incident, and a convicted felon is charged with his crime. Mitch's guilt drives him to throw out the case when it comes to trial – but when the accused later goes on a killing spree, he feels compelled to bring him to justice personally. Crime thriller, starring Dominic Cooper and Samuel L. Jackson. (2014)

Lucy's decision proves far from child's play

Lee Mack once said that if Lee and Lucy got together it would be the end of this show.

So after the pair's surprise Christmas marriage in 2015, fans thought they'd probably seen the last of hit comedy series. Mack's career has gone from strength to strength and he is now established as one of the UK's most recognisable comics.

Last year saw him return as resident team captain on Would I Lie To You?, host Duck Quacks Don't Echo, while in 2017 he will make his London West End debut alongside Griff Rhys Jones in The Miser.

But despite these other commitments, thankfully, Mack changed his mind about the show in which he made his name, and Not Going Out remains the longest-running UK television sitcom still on-air.

Plus, a ninth and 10th series have also been green-lit by the Beeb, so Lee and Lucy (Sally Bretton) are not going anywhere just yet.

One thing that perhaps changed Mack's mind was a shift in direction for the sitcom, which now features more

of a family element instead of the offbeat romantic comedy theme which dominated its first decade.

In the 10 years since Not Going Out began, Mack has himself become a father of three.

"It is quite weird writing about family life," he admitted in a TV interview last year. "We've slowed it down a bit, less jokes and more children's nappies."

Shane Allen, Controller of Comedy Commissioning at the BBC, is thrilled that Lee and Lucy are back: "Not Going Out is on its way to modern classic status as it clocks up another richly gag-packed and comic incident-heavy series," he says.

"The jump forward introduction of their kids provides Lee and Lucy with a new family domestic setting and springboard to broaden out their world from a 'will they, won't they?' dynamic to the 'why the hell have we?' that comes with parenting."

At the end of the last run, Lee and Lucy were a newlywed couple having their first child.

Fast forward seven years, and there are some major new additions to their

chaotic world – baby Charlie now has five-year-old twin siblings, Benji and Molly.

So how has Lee survived these dramatic life changes? And how are the parents finding the joy/relentless onslaught of bringing up kids?

If this wasn't enough for them to contend with, combine that with tricky family members in the form of Lee's lovely feckless father Frank (Bobby Ball), and close friends including the world-weary, or more specifically wine-weary, Toby (Hugh Dennis) and uptight ice-queen Anna (Abigail Cruttenden).

Thankfully, Lucy's parents Geoffrey (Geoffrey Whitehead) and Wendy (Deborah Grant) are on hand.

But what exactly do they make of Lee and Lucy's often mad house?

Last week we saw Lee trying to get the 'romance' with his wife back on track.

And in this second instalment, Lucy causes grave offence by choosing the wrong babysitter for their trio of offspring when the couple plan a night on the tiles.



Bobby Ball and Lee Mack star in Not Going Out, Friday, BBC1, 9.30pm

BEST OF THE REST

MONDAY

The Undateables

Channel 4, 9pm

Many of us have difficult navigating the unwritten rules of dating, but it's been particularly hard for 22-year-old Jamie, whose Asperger syndrome means he struggles to understand anything that isn't logical. However, he does have a passion for military history and strategy so as he takes his first steps into the world of relationships, he is armed with a plan. Luke, 26, from Hampshire, who is autistic, also believes in being prepared when it comes to love – although he sometimes finds it hard to make conversation, he's taught himself phrases in 15 different languages. But will his linguistic skills impress his date Alice, or will something be lost in translation? Meanwhile, Lizzie, 29, has a learning disability that means she struggles with some everyday tasks, but she still loves to shop – and she's now in the market for a boyfriend.

TUESDAY

How to Lose Weight Well

Channel 4, 8pm

Dr Xand van Tulleken, Hala El-Shafie help more dieters tackle weight-loss regimes. They begin by meeting Stefanie and Jade from Harrow who have

just 10 days to slim down before the launch of their clothing label. Jade tests a low-fat diet, while sugar addict Stefanie must survive on foods that don't contain the sweet stuff. Later, the duo challenge fast-food fan Matt from Redditch to test a 'warrior' diet, which involves eating like a Roman soldier. And finally Rob from the Wirral tries a 'Sleeping Beauty' regime, in the hope that sleeping more will help his body optimise the hormones that control his metabolism and appetite. But will there be a happy ever after as far as his diet is concerned?

WEDNESDAY

No Offence

Channel 4, 9pm

The second series of Paul Abbott's Manchester-set police comedy-drama continues. As no-nonsense DI Viv Deering (Joanna Scanlan) and impulsive DC Dinah Kowalska (Elaine Cassidy) search for the people who are helping local gang the Attahs, including its fearsome leader Norah (Rakie Ayola), in child exploitation, they uncover tensions within the family that could lead to a breakthrough in the case. However, when the team

is called to an armed robbery at a pub in a converted bank, it soon escalates into a life-threatening hostage situation. Elsewhere, PC Jonah Mitchell (Ste Johnson) pursues a man posing as a paramedic with a knack of slipping through legal loopholes.

THURSDAY

Spy in the Wild

BBC1, 8pm

Undercover cameras help to explore the world of animal intelligence, ingenuity and creativity in their hunting, protection and health. Spy Orang-utan meets her real-life counterparts in Borneo to capture how, living close to local people, they have gained unexpected skills in sawing wood and washing with soap, while Spy Termite catches one of the world's cleverest animal tricksters, the drongo, as he tries to outwit a group of meerkats in the battle for food.



Unforgotten, Thursday, ITV, 9pm

Unforgotten

ITV, 9pm

Further investigations into David Walker's life suggest he was a troubled man with a number of issues. Marion has a prickly chat with Cassie about her past and the inquiry reveals her close relationship with an IRA activist. As the police investigation encroaches on their life, Sara and Colin open up to their partners with secrets about their past. Whodunit, starring Nicola Walker.

FRIDAY

President Trump: The Inauguration

BBC1, 4pm

There's already been a lot of speculation about Donald Trump's inauguration, most of it concerning which big names had allegedly turned down the opportunity to perform. But no doubt there will still be plenty of pomp and circumstance as Trump is sworn in as the 45th President of the United States. As befits such a historical occasion, the ceremony is being covered by both the BBC and ITV, live from Washington, DC. As well as bringing us the Oath of Office, there will also be analysis from the channels' assorted experts, who will no doubt be paying particularly close attention to Trump's inaugural address for further clues about his vision for America and the direction of his presidency.

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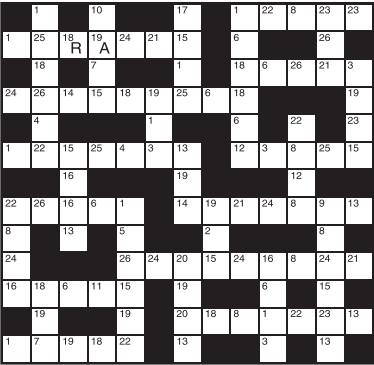
Many fireplaces / stoves on display



BRAIN GYM No.411

Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



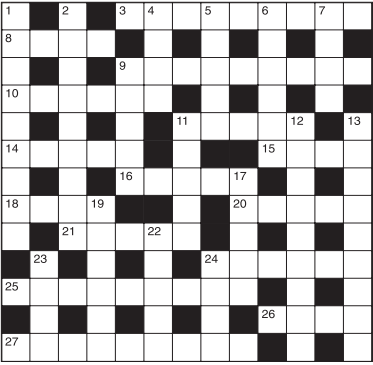
LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
N	T	V	H	A	W	K	C	R	X	U	E	O
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
S	D	Z	Q	J	L	M	I	F	P	B	Y	G

Double Crossword

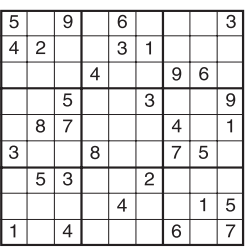
Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

- Cryptic Clues:**
- Across**
- 3. Foreign food - make the GP eat this! (9)
 - 8. Proper ones appear in the real estate market (4)
 - 9. Governs, i.e., as a ruler (9)
 - 10. This will smooth out the wave (6)
 - 11. It's mounted when differently set by the editor (5)
 - 14. The yarn in the novel is legendary (5)
 - 15. Give heed to a brief message (4)
 - 16. Refer to another court to pardon (5)
 - 18. The boy to assume an attitude of prayer, we hear (4)
 - 20. Spills associated with tenanted houses (5)
 - 21. One in a strange sect makes a quotation (5)
 - 24. Maid to spoil a Scotsman! (6)
 - 25. One in unspilt surroundings, like a bachelor (9)
 - 26. Avoid a colloquial word of command (4)
 - 27. The stage property is a toy (9)
- Down**
- 1. To disturb the fish is alarming (9)
 - 2. True to life, but it is clear there's change (9)
 - 4. Inferior alternative to the Post Office (4)
 - 5. One who is entertained arrived at the right conclusion, one hears (5)
 - 6. One by one (6)
 - 7. Closely follows true quotations (4)
 - 9. One who tacks together a waste disposal unit (5)
 - 11. Distress call about mother returning to Greek island (5)
 - 12. Thorough antonym of up left! (9)
 - 13. Finding a logical cause, as one is upset in the arena (9)
 - 17. Walk on the imprint of a tyre (5)
 - 19. Illuminated one undefined prayer of supplication (6)
 - 22. There's no start to famine - this produces food (5)
 - 23. In the Mediterranean I loved the colour (4)
 - 24. The average man who's tight-fisted is (4)



- Quick Clues:**
- Across**
- 3. Pen-name (9)
 - 8. Detail (4)
 - 9. In utter poverty (9)
 - 10. Diminish (6)
 - 11. Maxim (5)
 - 14. Foster (5)
 - 15. Authentic (4)
 - 16. Dance (5)
 - 18. Retailled (4)
 - 20. Well (5)
 - 21. Give up (5)
 - 24. Drive (6)
 - 25. Harmonize (9)
 - 26. Daybreak (4)
 - 27. Dispute (9)
- Down**
- 1. Fiddler (9)
 - 2. Unhurried (9)
 - 4. Observed (4)
 - 5. Unfasten (5)
 - 6. Start (6)
 - 7. Abominable snowman (4)
 - 9. Postpone (5)
 - 11. Shy (5)
 - 12. Celebrating victory (9)
 - 13. Deadly (9)
 - 17. Burning (5)
 - 19. Repudiate (6)
 - 22. Regional (5)
 - 23. Equipment (4)
 - 24. Plot (4)

Sudoku



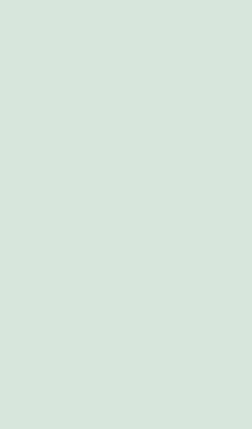
Fill in the grid below so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS >

2	1	8	5	4	7	3	9	6
5	9	6	2	1	3	4	8	7
4	3	7	8	9	1	5	2	
9	6	2	8	5	1	7	3	4
8	7	5	3	2	4	9	6	1
1	4	3	7	9	6	8	2	5
3	5	4	9	7	2	6	1	8
6	8	1	4	3	5	2	7	9
7	2	9	1	6	8	5	4	3

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS: CRYPTIC - Across: 1 Away; 3 Trophies; 8 Vert: 9 Imparted; 11 Consequences; 13 Treaty; 14 Salami; 17 Reinvestment; 20 Latitude; 21 Dock; 22 Believer; 23 Sets. Down: 1 Advocate; 2 Arrange; 4 Rumpus; 5 Plain facts; 6 In the; 7 Side; 10 Getting the; 12 Mistakes; 15 Anemone; 16 Needle; 18 Exol; 19 Club. QUICK - Across: 1 Pull; 3 Badinage; 8 Rich; 9 Protrude; 11 Affectionate; 13 Career; 14 Divide; 17 Impertinence; 20 Take away; 21 Aboed; 22 Horseman; 23 Bear. Down: 1 Parfance; 2 Lucifer; 4 Afraid; 5 Intentions; 6 Adult; 7 Eden; 10 Accelerate; 12 Defender; 15 Ignore; 16 Strata; 18 Maker; 19 Itch.

Thinking space



Quiz

- 1. What does the M stand for in JMW Turner?
- 2. What do we call a quasi-autonomous non-governmental organisation?
- 3. Which actor's first names are John Uhler III?
- 4. Which plant has bird's-foot and hop varieties?
- 5. By which king was the inch defined in statute?

- 6. In which year was Greenpeace founded?
- 7. To which region was Cain exiled after he had killed Abel?
- 8. In which country are the Plains of Abraham?
- 9. Which city lies on the north side of the Firth of Tay?
- 10. To which flower family does vanilla belong?

Last week's solutions:

Quiz: 1 Pig; 2 David Blunkett; 3 Imperial War Museum; 4 W C Fields; 5 North Atlantic; 6 Dandelion; 7 God Save the Queen; 8 Kevin Keegan; 9 Phil Spector; 10 Ink blots.

Niner: COUNTRIES

Niner

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

18223654 gives a jewel,
24859 gives a second jewel,
169678 gives a crystalline compound.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

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An angel overlooks Lake Malaren, Sormland



The picturesque town of Mariefred



Dawn over Lake Malaren in Mariefred, Sormland



Maria Printz, owner of the Printz bakery in Stallarholmen

How Sweden harnesses delight of simple but joyous traditions

WINNING a Nobel Prize could arguably be the best Christmas present of all. But not for lyricist Bob Dylan, one of this year's best-known laureates.

"He won't even be coming to the ceremony," my taxi driver complains as we whirl through snow-dusted cobbled streets below Stockholm's City Hall. He has other plans, apparently."

Three days after the grand December 10 banquet, honoured guests are woken from their rooms at the prestigious Grand Hotel by singing angels carrying candles, part of the St Lucia tradition. It's fair to say Mr Tambourine Man won't be in their repertoire. . . No matter; the show will go on.

Swedes honour traditions with clockwork precision, something I discover on a week-end winter break to their capital city and its

Sarah Marshall reports

surrounding areas. Fleeing the commercialised circus of high-street chaos, I surface in a world of clean, crisp sophistication, where flashing rainbow lights and tacky tinsel are superseded by simple lingonberry wreaths and the flickering gold flames of advent candles.

It's Christmas time, and the markets have sprung up in the city. One of the most atmospheric is held at Hovstallet, the Royal Stable. Stooping in a loose-fitting tartan blazer, equerry Lars shows me the king's private property, which is open for public tours throughout the year.

"This is Stockholm's best kept secret," he whispers, as we weave through ornate royal carriages and past pedigree horses nuzzling into their mangers, entering a room filled with 38 gleaming harnesses.

"Every year, two are flown by hand luggage to your Buckingham Palace, where skilled craftsmen make repairs," Lars tells me. "We give the horses these jingle bells to wear in winter so they can be heard by traffic when the sound of their hooves is deadened by snow."

Inventive

As the morning wears on, shoppers pour into the sky-lit Riding Hall and a labyrinth of stables, where stalls sell national favourites such as smoked fish, marzipan pigs and a parade of inventive condiments.

Sheepskin rugs and cushions spiral with tight silky curls, and toy elves peer from an unkempt tangle of felt and wool. Ice scrapers with knitted handles are my novelty gift find of the day. Most people are gathering goods for their Christmas table. But to discover an even greater selection of produce,

I head to the bread basket region of Sormland, a 45-minute journey from Stockholm by train. Residents of Stallarholmen are hosting a Charles Dickens-themed market, with carol singers gathered around a log fire and aromas of roast pork.

Gregarious baker Maria Printz is doing a roaring trade in sticky cinnamon buns and saffron cakes, traditionally eaten at this time of year.

Many of the local meats, cheeses and smoked fish make their way into a traditional julbord (a Swedish smorgasbord) served at Gripsholms Vardshus, a cosy inn located in nearby Mariefred. Vodka-infused salmon, herring pickled with fennel, and a salty roast gammon are all highlights.

I learn more about the origins of this former Viking settlement at the Callanderska Garden folklore centre, a 274-year-old red clapperboard house.

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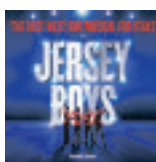
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Five-bedroomed semi-detached in cul-de-sac

In a cul-de-sac position just off the Oakham Road in Dingle Close, this five-bedroomed extended semi-detached family home is for sale through Trinity Property at £250,000.

Having double glazing and central heating, the driveway to the front leads to the front door, into an entrance lobby and then into the entrance hall. There are stairs to the

OAKHAM

£250,000

first floor, a door to the downstairs WC and further doors to an open plan lounge/dining room to the front, a through room with doors to the rear garden, a utility area leading through to the modern fitted kitchen with a breakfast bar and with a family

room off. On the first floor there are five good sized bedrooms, and the main bedroom with an en-suite shower/WC room off it.

There is also a house bathroom/ WC with a bath and separate shower with a separate WC down stairs. The rear garden includes decking.

For further information contact Trinity Property on 01384 213 395.

Extended home offers space and amenities right on the doorstep

HALESOWEN

£134,950

>>>

This extended three-bedroomed mid-terrace property in Slade Road, Halesowen is for sale through Hicks Hadley at £134,950.

It has a large reception room, an extended dining kitchen, a downstairs cloakroom, three bedrooms and a family bathroom. The property further benefits from having central heating, off-road parking and is situated close to local amenities and public transport links into both Halesowen and Stourbridge.

In more detail the lounge has French doors into the kitchen. The bathroom is fully tiled and has a shower cubicle.

Contact Hicks Hadley on 0121 5856667 or visit www.hickshadley.com



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HALESOWEN, Springfield Road£1,450 pcm+Fees
A unique extended detached residence in this very convenient location. This lovely property has 3 reception rooms, large kitchen/dining area with breakfast bar, downstairs w.c., 5 double bedrooms (2 with French doors leading to balcony overlooking garden, beautiful bathroom with separate shower, large rear garden, driveway and double garage. Also features: CCTV, full disk-up alarm system, bathroom with sauna/steam room & Jacuzzi bath. EPC: TBC



HALESOWEN, Sunbury Road£795 pcm+Fees
A superbly presented modern detached family home in central Halesowen, perfect for Windsor & Earls High School & Halesowen College. Featuring a spacious lounge/dining area, conservatory, fitted kitchen, downstairs cloakroom, 3 good size bedrooms & family bathroom on the 1st floor. The property has a driveway for 2 cars & garage, gas central heating, double glazing and a lovely garden to the rear overlooking Windsor High School playing fields. EPC: TBC



STOURBRIDGE, Baylie Street£725 pcm+Fees
Stunning mid terrace period property located in the sought after Stourbridge Old Quarter. This house has been finished to an exceptional standard and offers reception hall, generous through lounge, impressive kitchen with integrated appliances, utility room, guest w.c., two double bedrooms, superb bathroom with roll top bath and separate shower and good size loft room. Also features a courtyard garden and gas central heating and majority double glazed. EPC: D



HALESOWEN, Long Innage£675 pcm+Fees
UNDERGOING A REFURBISHMENT! A modern link detached family home in this most popular location, having spacious accommodation comprising large lounge, fitted kitchen, rear garden with decking, 3 good sized bedrooms, family bathroom with corner bath & separate shower, driveway parking & garage. EPC: E



BRIERLEY HILL, Walker Avenue£675 pcm+Fees
UNDERGOING A REFURBISHMENT! A modern semi-detached house offering spacious family, accommodation comprising of: entrance hallway, large lounge, fitted kitchen, 3 good sized bedrooms, new bathroom with shower, driveway parking & garage. EPC: C



HALESOWEN, Newton Court£650 pcm+Fees
City style penthouse living in Halesowen! A stunning 3 bedroom 1st floor apartment finished to an extremely high standard and offering an incredible amount of flexible living accommodation. Situated within a deluxe development of just 3 luxury apartments. Featuring 2 double bedrooms with fitted wardrobes, 1 single bedroom, 2 bathrooms and separate walk-in showers, striking living accommodation and views into the adjacent trees. Secondary glazing ensures



HALESOWEN, Hunnington Crescent£650 pcm+Fees
Recently redecorated and carpeted. This huge 3 bedroom town house has had a full redecoration, carpets and boiler. This house will not stay around for long as its so close to Halesowen Town Centre. Featuring 3 bedrooms, a large lounge with stunning views, bathroom with shower, driveway and garage parking, downstairs wc, small low maintenance rear garden. EPC: D



HALESOWEN, Rossendale Close£650 pcm+Fees
A lovely 2 bedroom semi detached bungalow in a quiet cul-de-sac, newly decorated & carpeted. Also ideal for the number 9 bus in to Stourbridge, Halesowen & Birmingham. Featuring modern fitted kitchen with oven/hob, large lounge/conservatory (off the bedrooms), 2 good size bedrooms, bathroom with shower, driveway & private rear garden. EPC: D



HALESOWEN, Blackberry Lane£825 pcm+Fees
Not to be missed! A lovely mid terrace in a very popular location close to Town Centre having been newly painted & new carpets upstairs comprising of: Lounge, fitted dining kitchen with appliances, 2 bedrooms & a further carpeted loft room accessed by strong & sturdy wooden ladders, refitted bathroom, central heating & double glazing, private rear garden with storage shed, on road parking, available now. EPC: D



ROWLEY REGIS, The Avenue£595 pcm+Fees
A fantastic opportunity to rent a new build property in a very convenient location close to train & bus links. This 2 bed semi-detached is finished to an exceptional standard. The property features a spacious lounge with patio doors leading to a low maintenance garden, modern fitted kitchen with cooker/hob, downstairs w.c., 2 double bedrooms, rear garden, driveway parking, double glazing and gas central heating. MINIMUM CONTRACT OF 12 MONTHS. EPC: B



HALESOWEN, Cobham Road£595 pcm+Fees
Well presented 2 bedroom mid terraced house situated in this popular residential location being in walking distance of Halesowen Town Centre. This property benefits from 2 reception rooms, 1 with dining area & patio doors leading to rear garden, kitchen, downstairs bathroom with shower, 2 double bedrooms, double glazing and gas central heating. EPC: E



HALESOWEN, Park Road £575 pcm+Fees
A modern mid terraced house on the number 9 bus route to Halesowen, Stourbridge and Birmingham. Having been completely re-decorated and new carpets throughout, briefly comprising: Lounge, Kitchen/dining area, rear garden, 2 bedrooms, master with en-suite, a further bedroom, gas central heating, double glazing, 1 allocated parking space, unfurnished. EPC: C



HALESOWEN, Beecher Road£575 pcm+Fees
A very well presented semi-detached house, in a sought after area for Colley Lane Primary School and bus links. Featuring a large living room, fitted kitchen, 3 bedrooms, family bathroom with shower, double glazing, gas central heating, front and rear gardens, driveway parking. EPC: D



WORDSLEY, Lyndhurst Drive£550 pcm+Fees
Fantastic size property and a great location for local shops and transport links to Kingswinford, Stourbridge and Wordsley. This wonderfully presented semi-detached house features 2 double bedrooms, large dining kitchen, spacious lounge, bathroom with shower, gas central heating, double glazing, driveway parking. EPC: D



HALESOWEN, Princess Crescent£550 pcm+Fees
A very well presented 2nd floor flat available in this popular and convenient location in a corner cul-de-sac position, briefly comprising of a modern kitchen with a fridge and freezer, good size lounge, 2 good size bedrooms, bathroom with shower, garage & parking for 2 vehicles. EPC: C



CRADLEY HEATH, Sidaway Street£525 pcm+Fees
A well presented mid terraced property within walking distance to Old Hill. This home offers 2 reception rooms, modern fitted kitchen with appliances and utility area, downstairs shower room, 2 double bedrooms with 3rd room off master ideal for a dressing room or study, low maintenance garden, double glazing and electric heating. EPC: F



CRADLEY HEATH, Luanne Close£495 pcm+Fees
This lovely part furnished 2nd floor apartment, with views over the canal and on a popular development, comprising of 2 bedrooms, 1 with wardrobes, lounge with brown 1 shaped sofa, fitted kitchen with small fridge, gas central heating, bathroom with shower, allocated parking, and communal garden. EPC: B



OLDSWINFORD, Heath Lane£495 pcm+Fees
Ideally located in the centre of Oldswinford for shops, transport links and Mary Stevens Park. This large and spacious terrace house features 3 good size bedrooms, 2 reception rooms, downstairs bathroom, upstairs toilet, fitted kitchen, enclosed rear garden and on road parking. EPC: E



STOURBRIDGE, Stamberrill House£425 pcm+Fees
COMING SOON!! Fully refurbished apartments within a stones throw of Stourbridge Town Centre and on the number 9 bus route. This stunning 1 bedroom apartment on the 1st floor features an open plan lounge/fitted kitchen, shower room, 1 double bedroom & private rear parking. Not to be missed! EPC: TBC



STOURBRIDGE, Stamberrill House£425 pcm+Fees
Fully refurbished apartments within a stones throw of Stourbridge Town Centre and on the number 9 bus route. This stunning 1 bedroom apartment on the ground floor features an open plan lounge/fitted kitchen, shower room, 1 double bedroom & private rear parking. Not to be missed! EPC: TBC



WORCESTER, Martley Road£410 pcm+Fees
STUDENT LET!! A room with this three bedroom semi detached house, which is gas centrally heated and double glazed (where spec). Being within a short walk from University of Worcester.

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JAN 41, fed up of sitting at home every weekend watching TV alone. Feel the same and looking for love? please contact me. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425497

KATIE 35yrs, slender well educated brunette seeks no strings mutual pleasure with gent 40+. Must be discreet, married or single. ACA. Tel: 0906 515 3003 Box 419673

STACY 28yr old gorgeous brunette with buxom figure, intelligent and sensual, WLTm genuine male to get to know for fun dates and more. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425457

JANE, young 41, very broadminded seeks chap any age for discreet no strings fun, any age, no time wasters ACA. Tel No: 0906 515 3011 Box: 409715

SARAH, 41, dizzy blonde, blue eyes, loves to dance seeks affectionate, funny, fun male to make her laugh and brighten up her day. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425413

SOPHIA young 40yrs, married but bored, seeks discreet adult fun, any area, all calls answered. Tel: 0906 515 3019 Box: 413399

SUE, 60s lady, calling all gents who seek a mature solvent stylish lady. I can wine and dine you, you will have a nice time, call or text me. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 424781

EMILY, mature well educated lady, blonde and smart and broadminded seeks gent any age for no strings fun. ACA. Tel: 0906 515 3023 Box 421375

YOUNG looking Indian female, 40, enjoys meals in/out, good company and conversation, looking for likeminded male. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425493

HI Gents, I'm Kelly, a down to earth lady, 35yrs, shapely brunette, seeking someone with GSQH, looks unimportant, any age. ACA. I promise! Tel: 0906 515 3027 Box 42305

VIKKI 32yr old active female, confident, fit, loves night outs, looking for similar assertive male. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425453

NAUGHTY curvy 46yr old lady, outgoing and bubbly with a naughty side and lots of banter, WLTm chap 30+. If you are married even better. ACA. Tel: 0906 515 3015 Box 424543

SUE, attractive genuine lady, own home, loves to spoil a man, give me a call or text. ACA. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 424673

SARAH, 39yrs, married, seeking chap for no strings intimate times. Special friendship, mutual respect. Give me a call. Tel: 0906 515 3031 Box 408291

AMANDA, slim blonde, 50s seeks discreet gent for special times, mutually beneficial to us both. Call now. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425327

TAMIKKA, mature black beauty, hourglass figure and open minded. Piss call if you are discreet, broad minded and nice. I can travel and accommodate. ACA. Tel: 0906 515 3007 Box 42365

HELEN, mid 50's naughty lady seeks some fun times with gent any age. ACA. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 424493

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WANTED gent 50-76 for cosy nights in, good times, call or text me, you won't be sorry. I'm attractive and have lots to offer. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425339

MELINDA, 52yrs, attractive and broad minded seeking chap any age for some fun. Couples also. Text only Mailbox: 4131946

CAROL petite brunette, 38yrs, romantic, affectionate, outgoing, seeks similar sensual male for nice times together. Any age/looks. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425395

JOSIE, sexy black lady, 52yrs seeks adult times with concerning gent, any age, discreet clean, womanly figure. Text only Mailbox: 428592

LADY, looking for a mature, caring, loving gentleman, 55-70, to enjoy the finer things of life with and to be my best friend. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425309

ANNABELLE, sophisticated 28yrs hoping to meet older gent for adult fun, discreet, sincere, genuine advertiser. Text only Mailbox: 4157105

JEAN, mature lady, genuine with many hobbies, slim, blonde and attractive. WLTm interesting gent with GSQH, must be cheerful, looks unimportant. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 424675

EILEEN mid 60s seeks gent 50s-60s for friendship, possibly much more. ACA. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425341

LINDA, 48yrs attractive brunette seeks gent for laughter, winning dinner. Age unimportant. ACA. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425337

LOVING lady, romantic and tactile seeks like minded gent for special times, lets make each other feel special. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425325

ATTRACTIVE Caribbean lady 59yrs, very jolly and fun seeking gent any age who must love good times. ACA. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425323

ANDREA, 43, slim with long dark hair, blue eyes, loves to dance seeks romantic man to share intimate moments in or out. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425221

CAROL, mid 50s lady, young at heart, attractive and sexy (so I'm told!) Give me a call if you are a gent with GSQH. ACA. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 424783

THELMA, 58, slim, petite and Afro Caribbean, GSQH, trustworthy, honest and very caring, leave me your details if that sounds good to you! Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425195

PROFESSIONAL lady, mid 60s, interests include gardening, theatre, walking, days out and travelling, animal lover, looking for a professional gentleman, kind and caring, intellectual and outgoing, with gosh, for friendship possibly more, in the Stafford area. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 424569

MARY, passionate honest slim blue eyed blonde, 39yrs, likes nights in/out, looking for affectionate male, any age to spend adult fun times. Interested? call me. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425009

JACKIE, 56yrs, attractive lady who is lots of fun seeks like minded gent for nights in, days out and much more. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 424481

DONNA, 42, bright bubbly blue eyed blonde looking for someone to enjoy life and love to the full with. Call me. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 424873

RETIREd happy, caring, attractive female, likes gardening, travel, animals, comedy, seeks tall, funny, kind chap. Shropshire. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 411459

SUZANNA, 45, lonely beautiful classy French lady looking for happy decent reliable very sexy man for lots of TLC and good times. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 424847

CARAH, young looking curvy 41yr old female, bored with everyday routines, WLTm up for some fun discreet and extremely broadminded younger male. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 424827

DEBBIE, 50, petite blonde looking for some fun and adventure with similar fun loving mature male. Looks unimportant. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 424799

CALL or text me, I'm Claire, single, 41yrs loves life to the full, hoping you will contact me if you want a genuine fun time. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 424779

SARAH, mature feminine lady, kind caring but still has a sensual side, hoping to meet like minded, confident, non smoking gent with GSQH, looks unimportant. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 424777

JANE 40's, blonde blue eyed petite build, WLTm understanding discreet tall, caring man for daytime meets. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 424769

ANDREA, 43, slim with long dark hair, blue eyes, loves to dance seeks romantic man to share intimate moments in or out. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 424747

HI I'm Ellie, 39, pretty, funny, great figure, OHAC/child, have everything apart from a man, WLTm someone I wanna be with, not dissapoint. Call me. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 424635

DIVORCED female, attractive, sensual by nature, OHAC, bored with own company, looking to make life a little more exciting with likeminded man. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 424591

PATRICIA, 50s, solvent female, tactile, fun, likes to travel, seeks tall, easygoing mature male to enjoy all the good things in life with. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 424553

BARBARA, 36, slim blonde, likes music, sport, the outdoors, quiet nights in etc, WLTm kind honest gent to share interests and get to know me. Call me. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 424549

ANGELA, 49yrs, seeks male companion for nights out, dining, maybe more. ACA or text me. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 424495

JULIE, 53yrs, tall, slim, dark haired lady, sociable and fun loving, new to the area so WLTm men friends for fun, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 424497

SEXY brunette 39, petite, brown eyes, seeks energetic discreet guy for no strings fun and friendship. Age/status unimportant. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 424451

HEATHER, 48, well travelled solvent brunette looking to share a large glass of wine and whatever follows with affectionate man friend. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 424429

TERRI, attractive young looking 29yrs, long legged sporty seeking nice man to fall in love with, up to 45yrs. If that's you piss call, you have nothing to lose. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 424337

SUSAN, 43, pretty green eyed brunette looking for an interesting attractive man who would understand my wicked sense of humour. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 424381

JAY attractive Asian female 37, loves to dance, looking for older English gent to teach me some new steps, fall in love with, spoil, pamper and make feel very special. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 424255

WENDY, 44yrs, dark haired beauty with blue eyes and a fab figure. WLTm gent any age, give me a call and I promise to call you back, or text/email. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 424339

RENATA, 55, slim, attractive lady with long Auburn hair just wants to have a good time with likeminded older guy up to 75yrs. Looks/status unimportant. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 424263

LOUISE, 40, elegant genuine blonde who's been hurt in the past seeks tall handsome male to be her Mr Right. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 424261

MELANIE, 49yrs, varied interests, attractive, sensual lady seeks gent any age or status, call, see what happens. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 424337

YOUNG looking 63 year old male, GSQH, friendly, considerate, attractive, looking for a naughty female, any age/status, for adult fun and friendship. ACA. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425243

IRISH gent, 66, GSQH, n/s, wishes to meet lady, North Birmingham area, for friendship. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425269

JAMES, 59, 5ft11, average build, WLTm a Christian lady, 60-70, for companionship. Hope to hear from you. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425227

IRISH male, 62, 5ft 9ins, GSQH, independent, seeks genuine female for friendship initially. Birmingham area. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 420362

MALE 63, widower, Irish, GSQH, tall, independent, seeks special lady. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 409243

MALE 65, GSQH, seeks female for friendship and companionship. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 418389

TOM, 32, slim, attractive, own home, likes to eat out and in, WLTm honest, kind girl for tender, loving care and fun times. No time wasters please. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 424929

JAY, attractive, 6ft2, single father, loves a laugh and a giggle, looking for a lady for evenings out, company and maybe more. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 424303

CHRIS, 49yrs honest gent seeks lady 45-55 for socialising, friendship, maybe leading to romance. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425345

Single Men

SEMI retired business man, early 60s, slim, well travelled, fit, tanned, good looking, solvent and very discreet, with female, 35-55, married or single, for daytime fun. Couples also welcome. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425183

IAN, 5ft8, medium build, OHAC, late 50s, likes most things, holidays, gardening, motorbikes, WLTm similar aged lady, 50-60, with nice personality. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 421345

I'M Andy, 52, looking for a lady, 50-65, for long term relationship, so text me and lets see what happens. Text only. Mailbox: 5396692

MATURE male, 50, medium-build, varied interests, seeks true Christian female, 35-45, who enjoys evenings in and dining out, for friendship or possibly more. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419283

ATTRACTIVE male, 58, seeks adventurous female, 50-70, for close fun. Any status or sex. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425353

GARY, 46, 5ft10, blue eyes, GSQH, likes football, quiet nights in, nights out, cinema, walking, travelling, looking for a likewise woman, 35-50, bubbly and fun loving with a GSQH. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425441

DAN 46, easy going chap WLTm a lady 40+ for an uncomplicated discreet friendship with on strings fun. Discretion guaranteed. Text only. Mailbox: 5959608

WELL made broad male, 5ft 10ins, medium build, looking for some adult fun with lovely lovely lady, possible LTR or friends with benefits. Text only. Mailbox: 5321154

MATURE male, 50, medium-build, varied interests, seeks true Christian female, 35-45, who enjoys evenings in and dining out, for friendship or possibly more. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419283

CHRISTIAN male 51, seeking Christian female, 35-45 for friendship, possibly more. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 423747

MATURE male, 70s, tall, retired, recovering alcoholic, WLTm someone understanding, maybe in the same situation for friendship and mutual support. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425263

MIKE 49, slim, young looks, seeks female, 35-50 for friendship and going out. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 356651

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DAVE, 54, 5ft10, medium build, easy going, happy, looking for an attractive, loving and caring female, 45-65, for friendship and relationship. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 423073

YOUNG 70 widower, fit, lonely, 5ft 11ins, 11st, likes drives, walks, DIY, meals out, gardening, smoker, looking for lady to spend life with. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 424687

BIG is beautiful is larger is lovelier. Steve 58, seeking broadminded, adventurous BBW for fun times. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412031

MALE, 64, single, n/s, likes music, films, driving, nights in, dining out, trips, WLTm lady, 50-70, looks unimportant, for friendship and relationship. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 423148

CARING male, 55, N/S, medium build, likes meals out, music, cinema, sports, driving, seeks female, 40-60 for friendship. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 239148

HONEST male, 60s, N/S, GSQH, car owner, seeks female, 55-70 for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 416817

MALE, 63, caring, easygoing, N/S seeks female 50-70 for friendship and romance. Looks unimportant. Likes occasional drink, eating in/out, cinema and driving. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 418893

CHRISTIAN male 51, seeking Christian female, 35-45 for friendship, possibly more. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 423747

ANY mature women over 60 seeking adult fun - this attractive male 58 will cater for your needs, any size or status. Text only. Mailbox: 5410860

MALE, 69, 5ft2, dark hair, looking for a lady, 50-60, to share the good things in life. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 424759

WIDOWER, 60s, GSQH, n/s, likes places of interest, country walks, cats and dogs, music, theatre and cinema, still looking for a lady, around 55-65, for companionship. ACA. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 424709

ATTRACTIVE, tall, dark, professional male, 50, GSQH, easygoing, enjoys sport, socialising, good company, looking to meet attractive female for fun, adventure and take things from there. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 424563

ADVENTUROUS 36 year old male, slim, dark hair, likes music, cycling and photography, seeks female for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 417235

Gay Singles

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GAY feminine female with GSQH WLTm gay feminine females for friendship, possible relationship. Text only. Mailbox: 5631357

MALE, 68, seeks older male, 70-80, for adult fun, married welcome. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425473

JONNY, 24yrs, gay curious, not sure what to do, older men pls call me and help me understand. Text only Mailbox: 4068657

PAUL, 50, Birmingham area, looking to meet up for fun times, maybe relationship with a guy, 25-70, can accommodate. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425487

MATURE bi looking for a mature gay or bi male in the B'ham area. Cannot accommodate. ACA. Text only. Mailbox: 4758692

BOYISH male, 5ft7, smooth, cultured, passive, likes arts, animals, Mediterranean lifestyle, seeks active, tall, funny man for LTR. Shropshire/London/anywhere. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 424973

BI male seeking male for fun times and friendship. Text only. Mailbox: 4830151

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full time - general

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8
Motoring

cars under £1500

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FORD FOCUS C MAX

1.6 diesel, 55 reg, MoT August, used daily, very clean.

Bargain £500 no offers.

07961 669911.

BARGAIN
NISSAN ALMERA TINO HURRICANE MPV

02 reg., MoT May 2, 2017, 92,000 miles, leather seats, CD player, towbar, clean inside and out.

£500 ono

07948 031307.

NISSAN MICRA
2005, 97,000 Miles, Blue, abs, electric windows, air bag, fsh, MoT, central locking, pas, Stereo, CD
£650 ono
07775 337042

PEUGEOT 307 1.4
Petrol, 104+ miles, 05, MoT February 2017, four new tyres, very good condition inside and out, lady owner, very good runner and reliable
£550 o.n.o.
07515 770277.

EXCELLENT CONDITION
RENAULT CLIO

1.2CC

04 reg, full MoT 5dr, CD player, alloy wheels, sunroof, low miles, excellent condition.

£995.

07826 460800.

MUST BE SEEN
RENAULT LAGUNA ALIZE

2000, 5-dr hatchback, sun roof, electric windows, CD player, new tyres, tow bar, very reliable Family / work car,

MoT April 2017.

£750.

01746 764455. 07772 836066.

VAUXHALL ASTRA CLUB CDTi
5Dr hatchback, 2005, black, diesel, 1686cc, MoT end of January 2017, 140,000 miles, good condition.
£700 o.n.o.
07783 039980
or
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cars over £1500

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£1500 ono
07943388142

PRESTIGE
MERCEDES SL350 AUTOMATIC CONVERTIBLE

54 reg. 74,000 miles, FSH, Obsidian Black, with cream leather, keyless go, power hood, panoramic glass roof, anti roll bar wind deflector, alloys, sat nav, Xenon lights, 2 keys.
Absolutely pristine.
£9,999.
07836 204450 or 07545 601552.



RENAULT CLIO DYNAMIQUE

2011, 39,000 miles, electric windows, air con, cruise control, pas, Navigation System.

Very good condition.

£2,999.

07879 403302.



RENAULT GRAND SCENIC

2010, 51k, bronze, abs, electric windows/mirrors, air bag, air con, alarm, long MoT, central locking, cruise control, pas, diesel, alloys, CD, Sat Nav.

£4,750 ono.

07841 017382.

SORRY TO SELL IT

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2 owners from new with fsh, low guaranteed mileage for year, 18in MG alloys with four new tyres plus four original Rover alloys with good tyres, very nice and well looked after vehicle, regrettable sale due to unexpected Christmas present.

£1,550

07773 354042.

1ST TO SEE WILL BUY
TOYOTA YARIS 1.0VVTi

57 reg., 3-dr, silver, Lady owner, FSH, 47,000 miles, immaculate.

£2,150

07962 268640.

EXCELLENT CONDITION
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Grey black, September 2004, 14,400 miles, MoT until to March, one lady owner, never raced or rallied, always garaged, religiously serviced annually by main dealer, spotless as really careful.

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9
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10
Personals

personal

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GENUINE ATTRACTIVE SLIM MAN 53

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MALE, 61

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general

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The benchmark for family motoring

By John Griffiths

Vauxhall's Zafira has always been about flexibility and a family-friendly character: a car to carry seven people or the amount of cargo that would otherwise require a medium van.

It's no surprise then that this multi-purpose vehicle (MPV) has established itself as a class leader, even though SUV-styled cars are to some extent stealing its thunder along with that of hatchbacks and saloons.

That might seem a bit odd when these SUVs (most of which don't have off-road or even bad weather capability) can't match the Zafira for sheer space and flexibility, but trends come and go in the motor industry like any other. But loyal MPV owners will be pleased to know Vauxhall is not only sticking with the Zafira, it has just launched a new and much improved version.

The latest Zafira Tourer is bigger, tuned to provide a better drive and is kitted out with some of the latest computer, connectivity and safety technology, including the unique to Vauxhall OnStar system which could save your life or get your car back if it's stolen.

List prices range from £18,665 to £29,630 and engines include a 1.4 litre petrol turbo with 140PS, a 1.6 litre, 136PS turbo diesel and a 2.0 litre diesel with 170PS.

The test car was a mid-range at £23,370, in Tech Line and powered by the bigger engine and six-speed manual gearbox. That seems like value for money bearing in mind the high levels of standard equipment, space and practicality compared to many hatchbacks and SUVs in the same price bracket.

While the most popular engine choice is likely to be the small, 1.6 diesel familiar from

other Vauxhalls such as the new Astra and the Mokka X, the 2.0 litre diesel is worthy of consideration.

Of course it's quicker (0 to 62mph in 9.1 seconds) but I'm not sure an extra second or so off the traffic lights sprint is all that important in this type of car. The real benefit is the 400Nm of torque, which is all there from just 1,750rpm, which gives the engine tremendous flexibility and refinement.

Both engines are noted for their quiet, smooth operation, too, but the 1.6 will no doubt appeal to those who appreciate extra fuel and tax efficiency. The figures for the 2.0 are impressive at 57.7mpg and 129g/km while for the 1.6 they are 68.9mpg and 109g/km.

Don't write off the petrol alternative, though. While the capacity is just 1,400cc, remember this engine is turbocharged and so is endowed with a lot more power and torque – 140PS, 200NM and a sprint time of under ten seconds to 62mph. The official fuel economy figure is 42.2mpg and 158g/km. It can also save on your initial outlay, as model for model it's cheaper to buy than the diesel options.

The interior is still one of the most flexible in the market, with each of the five second and third row seats capable of being folded flat with just one hand. Those in the second row slide forward in the same flowing movement, allowing easier access to the third row.

With seven passengers on board, cargo space is limited but with five adults on board it's an impressive 710 litres, rising to a van-like 1,880 litres. You can, of course, fold down one, two, three four or five seats to juggle between passengers and cargo which makes it ideal for business use and the family.

The front architecture is new, too, reflecting the 'face' of the new Astra and underneath



The front architecture of the latest Vauxhall Zafira is now, reflecting the 'face' of the new Astra

there is a new suspension system front and rear.

The dash is dominated by the colour touchscreen controller which is multifunctional, controlling features such as navigation, audio and connectivity.

The lounge style seating includes a centre armrest with a variety of storage solutions, and electronic climate control, steering wheel mounted remote controls, privacy rear windows, cruise control, speed limiter, electric

windows and automatic headlights and wipers are standard, too.

Multiple airbags, ABS and an electronic stability system are part of the safety package.

The test car was also fitted with OnStar, the Vauxhall system which allows you to talk to an adviser at the company's Luton headquarters at the touch of a button. They can, using telematics, advise on the condition of the car such as oil levels or tyre pressures, or download a route into the car's navigation

system. It can even help you find a 'lost' car by switching on the lights or sounding the horn. But more seriously, if your car is stolen it can track it and disable the ignition until the police arrive.

There's also an 'SOS' which, if pressed, can allow the operator to send the emergency services to your location.

Such technology, combined with space, practicality and comfort, makes the new Zafira Tourer the benchmark for family motoring.



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The comprehensive revision of the Škoda Octavia family continues. Now, after the hatchback, estate and the fastest model variant – the Škoda Octavia vRS, comes the most versatile member of the family with innovations in technology and equipment.

The upgraded Škoda Octavia Scout launches with two engine variants and state-of-the-art all-wheel-drive technology with electronically controlled, hydraulic multi-plate clutch. With a ground clearance that has been increased by 30 mm in comparison to the Škoda Octavia estate, the compact five-door also masters rough terrain. Beyond that, it impresses with good climbing capability, a high towing capacity and numerous 'Simply Clever' features from Škoda.

The robust all-rounder impresses with a distinctive off-road look, innovative all-wheel drive, the best driving characteristics and increased versatility both on and off the road. The comprehensively reworked Scout bears the same front as the newest generation of Škoda Octavias and thereby underlines the family resemblance: it features a more prominent bonnet, the new front end with wide radiator grille and additional headlights with a crystalline look, full-LED headlights with adaptive front



The Scout has good boot capacity

headlights. Also the modified fog lights and tail lights are equipped with LED technology. Its independent character is recognisable by silver-coloured underbody protection at the front and the rear. The Rough-Road package is also part of standard equipment and features covering for the undercarriage, brake and fuel lines.

The Scout impresses with its interior space, which for the compact car segment is particularly generous, good body layout, distinct versatility, high level of functionality and great driving characteristics. Besides the increased ground clearance, the all-wheel drive with electronically controlled, hydraulic multi-plate clutch, which comes as standard, also ensures even greater driving pleasure off the road. When driving on rough terrain the advantages of the ramp angles, which have been increased to 16.6 degrees at the front and 14.5 degrees at the rear, become apparent.

Both the front and rear axle of the car are fitted with an electronic differential lock (EDL) as standard. EDL allows the car to pull away smoothly on difficult surfaces, transmitting drive to both the front and rear axles.

For safer and easier descents on rough terrain the off-road function is available for the Scout. When in use the speed of the vehicle is consistently maintained without the driver needing to do anything. Modern engine management, which increases safety during descents using braking, makes life easier.

The 'Simply Clever' features include a heated steering wheel and seats with the Thermo-Flux function which, from time to time, increases the air and moisture permeability and provides considerably more riding comfort in different climatic conditions – the upgraded Scout is therefore an adventurer in the truest sense. The boot has a capacity of 610 to 1740 litres and thanks to its width of 1010 mm, is also perfectly suited to transporting bulky loads without any problems. Numerous storage solutions in the interior increase practicality. Towing capacity is up to two tonnes, depending on the engine.

The reworked adventurer is available from market launch with two different four-cylinder engine variants: 2.0 TDI: 110 kW (150 PS), top speed 129 mph, 0 – 62 mph in 9.1 seconds, combined consumption 56.5 mpg, CO2 130 g/km

2.0 TDI: 135 kW (184 PS), top speed 136 mph, 0 – 62 mph in 7.6 seconds, combined consumption 55.4 mpg, CO2 133 g/km.

The current car is equipped with all the modern infotainment systems of the new Škoda generation. All of the capacitive touch displays feature a glass design. The wide range of driver assistance systems in the Scout sets new standards within its segment. Innovations here include Trailer Assist, Blind Spot Detect and Rear Traffic Alert. The Crew Protect Assist function, which closes windows and the sunroof in the event of an impending accident and tensions the seat belts on the front seats, is connected to the improved Front Assist function.



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Wolverhampton & Bilston AC's Psalm Roberts-Nash and Ellis Greatrex



Snooker champion Reanne Evans



Priory Park Boxing Club chairman Paul Gough with Dudley North MP Ian Austin

Sports stars grow from grassroots

SPORTING FEATURE

NICK ELWELL looks at some of the local sports stars who made the headlines in 2016

TEENAGERS Charlotte Breen and Katy Murmanis began the new year with Georgia on their minds.

The talented Tettenhall and Black Country Volleyball Club players were selected to play for England in their European Under-19 clashes with Georgia and Belarus.

Bilbrook Junior FC had cause for celebration in January after landing a £400,000 windfall from the FA, to be used on a new changing pavilion and improved pitches.

In February, Wednesfield Aces became the first cycle speedway club to receive money from Sport England with £6,000 to help fund coaching courses and new equipment. Meanwhile, East Park Wolves cycle speedway club marked their milestone 10th anniversary.

Wolverhampton and Bilston AC duo Ellis Greatrex and Psalm Roberts-Nash, both 16, claimed first and second in the 400m at both the Welsh Under-20 and senior championships.

Crowned

Sandwell's Kimura Shukokai Portway Karate team had 13 members called up by England for the World Championships in Berlin. In the boxing ring, Merridale BC's Akash Tugir, 17, was crowned champion at the England Youth Championships in Rotherham.

Halesowen's Laura Barker, 22, became a golden girl in the +70kg category at the British National Pro Jiu Jitsu Championships in London.

In March, 13-year-old Bloxwich jiu jitsu ace Lewis Newman, of Simkin Martial Arts Academy in Walsall, struck gold in the Pan-American Championships in class two of medium heavyweight division at Long Beach, California.

Wodensborough Boxing Club's Lauren Johnson landed the English middleweight title.

Dudley electrician Scott Palmer was called up to represent Great Britain at the European Sprint Duathlon in Germany. Year 10 and 11 girls from Coppice Performing Arts School were crowned national futsal champions.

Cannock's Zac Evans was buzzing after winning the EKF European Welterweight title, defeating Jean Marie Pierak



Jeweller Aaron Sheldon and auctioneer Ben Gamble with the Wednesbury Charity Cup

at the Lincoln Fight Factory. April saw the covers come off Springhill Cricket Club's new pavilion, while girl power ruled on a historic night for the Wolverhampton Sunday Football League as four female officials took charge of the Harry Round Cup final for the first time.

Halesowen Athletic Club honoured their most famous runner. A plaque was unveiled in Somers Square while the drive at the Abbey Stadium was named after Jack Price, who ran in the 1908 Olympic marathon in London and led the formation of the club in the 1920s.

Former England rugby captain and RFU chairman Bill Beaumont was guest of honour at a special dinner to commemorate Willenhall Rugby Club's 50th anniversary.

Women's world snooker champion Reanne Evans lifted

the Staffs and West Midlands League Individual Championship in May. Wodensborough BC's Benjamin Whittaker, 18, lifted the England Elite middleweight title, days after selection for the England podium squad. Snooker star Mark Allen checked into Bilston's Golden Cue club to help pocket £2,500 for Dudley Mind and the Deanesley Centre at New Cross Hospital.

Stourbridge karate ace Liam Reynolds was crowned an English champion at the age of 10. Meanwhile, 3 Hammers Golf claimed the Critchley Award from the Golf Foundation for its work in encouraging youngsters to take up the sport.

Walking football took centre stage at Molineux, while Wednesbury 11-year-olds Amillia Baker and Kirsty Maull

smashed their way to a national table tennis title. Former world champion Ken Doherty was the guest of honour at the Stourbridge Snooker League annual awards night. Penn Cricket Club took the wraps off their new £70,000 clubhouse and £25,000 state-of-the-art net facility.

Legendary football scout Les Green called time on his days of talent spotting at the age of 77.

Another former snooker champion, John Parrott, was guest of honour for the Staffs and West Midlands League awards night. Priory Park Boxing Club's new-look gym was opened in the presence of MP Ian Austin.

Wolverhampton University's Walsall campus was the venue for the Black Country School Games, featuring more than 1,400 youngsters.

Cyril Hockham took to the green at Willenhall Trinity Bowls Club to celebrate his 100th birthday in July.

Fordhouses under-13 cricketers were the pride of Staffordshire, becoming Nat West Club County champions.

The Dudley & Cradley Heath League was forced to blow the final whistle after a 106 years of competition.

Another local football league, the Wolverhampton Combination, admitted defeat in its battle to continue, after 113 years.

Powered

Halesowen Cricket Club landed their first major piece of silverware in 14 years in September, lifting the WCB Canterbury Cup at New Road.

Willenhall Trinity Bowls Club clinched their first-ever Staffordshire club competition, while Burntwood's Last Chance Saloon powered to the Great Britain Tug of War Federation Championship.

Landywood player Jack Harris potted his way to victory over snooker legend Jimmy White in a charity exhibition at Bilston's Golden Cue for the Paul Hunter Foundation.

In October, former New Zealand cricketer Jeremy Coney was the guest of honour as Netherton Cricket Club rounded off their 150th anniversary year with a dinner at Dudley's Village Hotel.

Aldridge cricketer Robert Steadman, a 16-year-old all-rounder, was named Young Volunteer of the Year at the NatWest Outstanding Service to Cricket Awards at Lord's.

In November, Burntwood racer Lloyd Shelley defended his Formula 600 title and winning the Sound of Thunder Class, while Kamila Czartolomna's powerboating success reaped reward for South Staffs SC in December.

Wood Green Athletic were celebrating a £1,000 windfall thanks to the sale of the 136-year-old Wednesbury Cup at auction. Willenhall Rugby Club stalwart Elfyn Pugh was honoured with a lifetime achievement award by the RFU.



John Cheetham, Ian Bonser, Rob Bluck, Harrison Worley and Will Dunn, of 3 Hammers golf complex



Officials Lucy Berridge, Zoe Barch, Lisa-Maria Lane and Emily Aldridge line up for the Harry Round Cup Final



Banks's turns into boxing battleground

ERROL Johnson's Black Country Boxing returns to Walsall next month with a four-fight Boxing Dinner Show at the Banks's Stadium.

'Battleground' features a quartet of undefeated boxers on the February 17 card.

Hot Halesowen prospect Lennox Clarke is in action as he looks to secure a title shot in 2017. The 25 year-old is unbeaten in 14 professional contests and has set his sights on a showdown with English Super Middleweight Champion Jahmaine Smyle. 'Dangerous' Clarke was ringside in November when Smyle retained his belt with a split decision victory over Leon McKenzie.

Talented Lichfield flyweight Brad Foster is also in action. 'The Blade' has recorded five straight professional victories since making the switch from kick boxing 12 months ago. The 19-year-old recently signed a three-year promotional contract with Frank Warren and, after securing nine world titles in kickboxing, is looking to reach world level as a boxer. Foster will enjoy a six round tune-up.

Former amateur star Connor Parker will be looking to build on his recent impressive professional debut when he fights in the paid ranks for just the second time. The Swadlincote super lightweight debuted in Tewkesbury in December and will be looking to make waves in the professional ranks in 2017.

West Bromwich light heavyweight prospect Joshua Stokes completes the card. Josh, brother of undefeated mid-weight prospect Tom, will make his professional debut after a solid amateur career with Wodensborough ABC.

Standard tickets for 'Battleground', priced at £35, are available by calling the boxers, £60 VIP tickets for tables of 10, with two-course meal, are available by calling Walsall FC on 01922 651414/416.

New rider Ayres his thanks at response from Heathens fans

CRADLEY rider Danny Ayres has been overwhelmed by the welcome from fans since joining the club last month.

Ayres will meet supporters for the first time when he appears on stage at Cradley Heath Liberal Club on Friday, February 3 with a bumper turnout expected.

It promises to be an entertaining evening as the 29-year-old talks about his life and career.

Ayres has made the switch to the Heathens from Kent – and he already has a big fan base in the West Midlands after wooing crowds during guest appearances for the club.

Said Ayres, who has revealed he is ahead of schedule in his recovery from shoulder surgery at the beginning of December: "I've been over the moon with the reaction from the Cradley fans. The support I've got has been great, and there couldn't really have been a better response since it's been announced."

The 'Danny Ayres Show' – hosted by broadcaster Nigel Pearson – starts at 7.30pm and admission is £5 on the door. The club will announce details of their meet the team night at the event.

Cricket club mourns batting legend



Legend Fred Parkin

THE funeral was taking place this week of one of Netherton Cricket Club's finest batsmen.

Club legend Fred Parkin passed away at the age of 98. Along with fellow run-getter Sid Allport, he was a dominant force at the Highbridge Road club in the 1960s.

Fred was also a well-known figure at Dudley Golf Club having turned to the fairways when he ended his playing days with Netherton at the age of 55.

Born in Jacksdale, Nottinghamshire, Fred moved to Dudley in 1958 to become deputy head at Holly Hall School. After

seeing his dream of becoming a pilot dashed, he served as a PE instructor before spending four years in Port Elizabeth, South Africa helping injured and wounded servicemen with their rehabilitation.

He returned to England and after a teaching spell in Norfolk he moved to the Black Country with his wife Edwina, son Jeremy and daughter Diane. He began playing for Netherton in 1959.

Jeremy said: "He liked rugby and football but cricket was his first love and he loved playing for Netherton. He averaged over 50 for Netherton and won the batting

award on numerous occasions." Jeremy, 65, who also played for Netherton and has served as secretary, added: "From what I have read and from what I have been told he was one of the best batsmen on the local cricket scene in the 1960s.

"My dad and Sid Allport were very good friends and were a formidable pairing out in the middle."

The pair shared a record second-wicket stand of 206 in 1961 with Fred scoring the first century recorded on the club's new scoreboard. His funeral was taking place at Gornal Crematorium on Tuesday.

Leaders turn it round after early scare

Nuneaton 32 Old Halesonians 17
TOP of the table Nuneaton were given an early scare before overcoming Hales at Liberty Way. The leaders found themselves trailing 10-7 at half-time but managed to turn things round.

Hales were hoping to avenge a white-wash at Wassell Grove earlier in the season, but Nuns made the better start and opened their account with a try from South African No.8 Umran Jadwat, converted.

Full back Ian Briggs kicked a penalty for Hales and then converted a Neil Mason try to put his side in front.

But in the second half Nuns were strong and started to dominate the scrum. The visitors were penalised and after converting were back level. Nuns were on the offensive and Hales knocked on under pressure. The ref allowed advantage for the home full back to break through for a converted try.

Another converted try gave Nuns a 24-10 advantage, but with nine minutes to go, Ben Barkley raced through for Hales and Briggs converted to narrow the gap. But hopes were dashed in the last five minutes by a try and then a penalty conceded under scrum pressure.

Hales travel to Old Towcesters on Saturday, kick off at 2.15 pm

Old Halesonians Second XV went down 45-0 to Nuneaton 2nds.

Old Hales had the better of possession for the first 10 minutes; however, this changed after a Nuneaton catch and drive from a lineup resulted in a converted try and they took advantage to lead 19-0 at the break.

In the last quarter they ran in four more tries, three converted.

The thirds lost 47-24 to Vesevians. Tony Shaw, Chris Harris and Neil Weston all scored tries. There was also a penalty try and two conversions from Billy Taylor.

'Yozza' through to second round tie

TIPTON'S Jamie Hughes comprehensively made it through to the second round of the BDO World Championship as he saw off Martin Atkins at Lakeside.

The 30-year-old dropped a set after striking first blood early on but peeled away to secure his passage through on Sunday night, writes Craig Birch.

The fourth seed kept his head and fired in four 180s along the way, averaging 94.38 to his fellow England international's 88.68.

The Black Country thrower will now take on Jim Williams in round two. He whitewashed Tony O'Shea 3-0 in the first round for the second year in a row.

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BOSS LOOKS UP AS DREAM ENDS

Wycombe Wanderers 2 Stourbridge 1
PROUD boss Gary Hackett hailed Stourbridge's Cup heroes after their fairytale ended and declared: "Now let's win promotion."

Adebayo Akinfenwa's late winner saw the Glassboys' historic run halted at the third round in front of more than 2,000 travelling supporters. Hackett, whose team had dumped out League One Northampton in the previous round, hopes his players can now take their form into the battle for promotion from the Evo-Stik Northern Premier Division, writes Matt Maher.

"We have a level headed bunch of players and they know what is needed now," he said. "We have to make sure we get in the play-offs at worst. Our aim at the start of the season was promotion and that is still it."

Stour looked destined to claim at least a replay when Dan Scarr cancelled out Sam Wood's opener 20 minutes from time.

Settled

Skipper Tom Tonks hit the underside of the bar before Akinfenwa settled the tie in the League Two side's favour with a late header.

Tonks, meanwhile, believes the Glassboys – playing in the third round for the first time in their 140-year history – delivered everything but the result. "Obviously we are a little bit gutted," he said. "But we have now matched a Football League team twice in the FA Cup. I could not have asked for anything more than the result."

So, the fairytale might be over but if you needed to see what the Cup run has done for Stourbridge, you only had to look at the stands which filled with their supporters and delivered a deafening noise long before kick-off.

Things reached a crescendo when Scarr dragged the Glassboys level with 20 minutes to go, cancelling out the early second half opener. But Akinfenwa took advantage of the only space afforded to him all afternoon by Stour's defence to head home a winner for the Chairboys seven minutes from time.

Attentions will now turn back to Stourbridge's battle for promotion from the Evo-Stik Northern Premier and they head to Skelmersdale on Saturday.



Dan Scarr slots home the Stourbridge equaliser during the FA Cup third round tie at Wycombe

Yeltz fail to Buck losing trend

Halesowen Town 2 Buxton 4

OUT of form Halesowen crashed to a dismal defeat against ten-man Buxton, despite taking an early lead.

Kaiman Anderson turned home a 30th minute rebound to put Halesowen ahead after Buxton's former Wolves goalkeeper Jan Budtz saved from Jordan Goddard. Matters looked even more grave for the visitors just four minutes later when Brad Grayson was given a straight red card for dissent to the officials.

But 10-man Buxton then introduced livewire substitute Jamie Jackson and he stunned the home crowd into disbelief by hitting two goals in six minutes to give Buxton a surprising half-time lead, before creating two further second-half goals as the Yeltz fell apart. Jackson slammed home a

great finish from the right with his first touch of the game to level after 39 minutes and Jackson then put Buxton 2-1 ahead in the 45th minute as he held off Liam Slade to slot another fine finish down the centre.

The Bucks made it a remarkable 3-1 in the 51st minute with Jackson causing the damage once again as he fired at goalkeeper John Bateman, allowing Greg Young to bundle home the loose ball.

Asa Charlton touched home to reduce the arrears at 3-2 in the 72nd minute after Budtz made a complete hash of substitute Matt Birley's free-kick. But dangerman Jackson completed Halesowen's misery by providing table-topping Buxton's fourth goal in the final minute as he surged down the right and squared for fellow substitute Nicky Walker to turn home.

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